

Trump speech to project optimism at time of bitter division

By JILL COLVIN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Standing before lawmakers in the grand-domed Capitol where his impeachment trial is still underway, President Donald Trump on Tuesday night will declare the state of the union strong, even when it is bitterly divided as he asks Americans for a second term. After becoming just the third president in U.S. history to be impeached,

Trump will try to move forward, aides say, offering an optimistic message that stresses economic growth in his annual address before Congress. But the impeachment drama will hang over him as he stands before the very lawmakers who have voted to remove him from office — and those who are expected to acquit him Wednesday when the Senate trial comes to a close.

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In this Feb. 5, 2019, file photo, President Donald Trump delivers his State of the Union address to a joint session of Congress on Capitol Hill in Washington, as Vice President Mike Pence and Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., watch.

Associated Press

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Trump speech to project optimism at time of bitter division

Continued from Front

Any attempt to try to be a messenger for unity will surely be dismissed at a time of palpable anger and rancor, much of which he has helped generate on both sides of the divide.

Senior administration officials were tight-lipped about the extent to which Trump would mention his impeachment, which he has denounced as a "witch hunt" orchestrated by Democrats to try to undo the results of the 2016 election and harm his reelection chances this November. They stressed this his prime-time speech was still a work in progress.

But they said Trump sees the speech as an opportunity to talk about moving the country ahead, contrast his vision with Democrats' and try to make the case to voters that he deserves four more years in the White House.

"We're really looking to giving a very, very positive message," Trump told reporters Sunday during a Super Bowl watch party.

"This has been a very partisan process and this is an opportunity for him to unify the country around opportunities for all Americans," added White House spokeswoman Jessica Ditto.

Trump will spend much of the speech highlighting the economy's strength, including the low employment rate, stressing how it has helped blue-collar workers and the middle class. A focus will be the new trade agreements he has negotiated, including his phase-one deal with China and the United States-Mexico-Canada agreement he signed last week.

It's a familiar message to anyone who has ever

tuned into one of the president's rallies.

But it's one the White House believes will reach a broader audience and have a more potent impact given the venue, especially among independent voters. His campaign has been courting these voters as it works to stitch together a winning coalition for his reelection.

"Once again, it will present that opportunity for the American people to see how much has been done that not necessarily has been showcased," said Ditto. "This is one of the president's best opportunities to talk about his record unfiltered with a captive audience."

The speech will include a section on health care. Aides say Trump is expected to go after what one official described as the "radical proposals being floated on the left," including the call by some Democratic presidential candidates for "Medicare for All." He will highlight efforts to reduce drug prices, end surprise medical billing and tackle the opioid epidemic, urging members of Congress to pass legislation to back his efforts.

Trump promised voters in 2016 that he would offer a health plan that was better and cheaper than President Barack Obama's Affordable Care Act, which his administration has tried to gut. Trump has yet to offer any detailed alternative.

While the White House said the president will have message of unity, he will also spend time on issues that have created great division and resonated with his political base. He will again highlight his signature issue — immigration — trumpeting the miles of border wall



The legal defense team for President Donald Trump is loaded on a bus on Capitol Hill in Washington, Friday, Jan. 31, 2020, as they leave after the Senate voted to not allow witnesses in the impeachment trial of President Donald Trump on charges of abuse of power and obstruction of Congress.

Associated Press

that have been constructed. He will once again excoriate "sanctuary cities" as dangerous criminal havens.

He will again dedicate a section to "American values," discussing efforts to protect "religious liberties" and limit access to abortions as he continues to court the evangelical and conservative Christian voters who form a crucial part of his base.

In addition, he will press Congress to pass legislation encouraging alternatives to traditional public schools and highlight passage of mandatory paid leave for federal workers. He will try to make the case that the U.S. government is leading by example and send a clear "signal" to the private sector to follow suit, one aide said.

He also will discuss foreign policy and national security at length.

Throughout his remarks, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, who led the im-

peachment charge, will sit over Trump's shoulder as a constant presence. Last year, the California Democrat created a viral internet meme with a an enthusiastic "clap back" gesture.

The audience will include Democrats such as California Rep. Adam Schiff,

who prosecuted much of the impeachment case against Trump on grounds that he obstructed Congress and abused his office by trying to pressure Ukraine to investigate a Trump political rival and by withholding crucial security aid. □

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Pennsylvania groundhog declares early spring 'a certainty'

PUNXSUTAWNEY, Pa. (AP) — Pennsylvania's most famous groundhog on Sunday declared: "Spring will be early, it's a certainty." At sunrise on Groundhog Day, members of Punxsutawney Phil's top hat-wearing inner circle revealed the cuddly oracle's prediction — his 134th, according to the Pennsylvania Tourism Office. Awoken by the crowd's chants of "Phil!" the groundhog was hoisted in the air for the assembly to hail before making his decision. He then grasped the glove of a handler as a member of

his inner circle announced that spring would come early this year. The annual event has its origin in a German legend that says if a furry rodent casts a shadow on Feb. 2, winter continues. If not, spring comes early. In reality, Phil's prediction is decided ahead of time by the group on Gobbler's Knob, a tiny hill just outside Punxsutawney. That's about 65 miles (105 kilometers) northeast of Pittsburgh. Over the past five years — from 2015 through 2019 — Phil has predicted six more

weeks of winter thrice and an early spring twice. According to records dating back to 1887, the Pennsylvanian prognosticator has predicted more winter more than 100 times, making this year's forecast a rare one overall. Phil's prediction was mirrored by one of his fellow groundhogs in New York. At the Staten Island Zoo, schoolchildren and elected officials cheered Sunday morning as a curtain was pulled back at a glass enclosure containing Staten Island Chuck. He also didn't see his shadow. □





Groundhog Club co-handler John Griffiths holds Punxsutawney Phil during the 134th celebration of Groundhog Day on Gobbler's Knob in Punxsutawney, Pa. Sunday, Feb. 2, 2020.

Associated Press

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In Iowa, anxiety and unpredictability cloud caucus finish

By JULIE PACE
and SARA BURNETT
Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — On the eve of the Iowa caucuses, Democratic presidential candidates hustled across the state on Sunday trying to fire up voters and make one last appeal to those struggling to make a final decision about their choice in the crowded field. Campaigns and voters acknowledged a palpable sense of unpredictability and anxiety as Democrats begin choosing which candidate to send on to a November face-off with President Donald Trump. The Democratic race is unusually large and jumbled heading into Monday's caucus, with four candidates locked in a fight for victory in Iowa and others still in position to pull off surprisingly strong finishes. Many voters say they're still weighing which White House hopeful they'll support. "This is going to go right down to the last second," said Symone Sanders, a senior adviser to former Vice President Joe



A man with breathing tubes holds up a sign that reads "Feel the Bern" as Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., left, speaks at a campaign stop at the Bernie 2020 Cedar Rapids Field Office, Sunday, Feb. 2, 2020, in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Biden campaign. Polls show Biden in a tight race in Iowa with Sens. Bernie Sanders of Vermont and Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, as well as former South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg. Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar and entrepreneur Andrew Yang are also competing

aggressively in the state. Many campaigns were looking to a final weekend poll to provide some measure of clarity. But late Saturday, CNN and The Des Moines Register opted not to release the survey because of worries the results may have been compromised. New

caucus rules have also left the campaigns working in overdrive to set expectations. For the first time, the Iowa Democratic Party will release three sets of results: who voters align with at the start of the night; who they pick after voters supporting nonviable candidates get to make a second choice; and the number of state delegate equivalents each candidate gets.

The new rules were mandated by the Democratic National Committee as part of a package of changes sought by Sanders following his loss to Hillary Clinton in the 2016 presidential primaries. The revisions were designed to make the caucus system more transparent and to make sure that even the lowest-performing candidates get credit for all the votes they receive. But party officials in Iowa and at the DNC have privately expressed concerns that but multiple campaigns will spin the results in their favor, potentially creating chaos on caucus night.

The Associated Press will declare a winner in Iowa based on the number of state delegates each candidate wins. The AP will also report all three results.

Despite the late-stage turbulence and confusion, the candidates spent

Sunday making bold pronouncements. Speaking to several hundred supporters in Cedar Rapids, Sanders declared "we are the campaign of energy and excitement" and said "we are in a position to win tomorrow night."

Warren, who is also rallying progressive voters, pressed her supporters to "fight back" if they ever lose hope. She directly addressed any questions about whether a woman can win, pointing to the 2018 elections as evidence that "women win" and adding "let's get this done."

Meanwhile, Buttigieg talked up his newcomer status, telling a crowd of more than 2,000 in Des Moines that "we can't be afraid of the future and new voices as our leaders" and "we are just one day away from victory in the Iowa caucuses!" But Biden, emphasizing his decades of Washington experience, told voters there's no time for "on-the-job training."

Biden's campaign appeared to be trying to lower Iowa expectations, cautioning against reading too much into Monday's results. Biden is hoping to sustain enough enthusiasm and money coming out of Iowa to make it to more diverse states where he hopes to draw strong support from black voters. His campaign is particularly focused on South Carolina, the fourth state on the primary schedule.

Still, the closing hours leading into the caucuses signaled challenges ahead. NBC News reported that former Secretary of State John Kerry, one of Biden's most prominent supporters, was overheard talking about what it would take to launch a 2020 run. Kerry, who won the 2004 Iowa caucuses, later tweeted that he was "absolutely not running for president" and used an expletive to describe reporting to the contrary. He later issued a tweet without the expletive. But the episode was a sign of possible unease in Biden's orbit. □

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DHS: New screening to begin amid coronavirus concerns

WASHINGTON (AP) — As the U.S. steps up its response to the coronavirus outbreak, the Department of Homeland Security is warning airline passengers that their flights may wind up rerouted if officials discover mid-flight that someone onboard has been in China in the last 14 days.

That guidance was included in a notice released by the department Sunday as new travel restrictions officially go into effect for flights commencing after 5 p.m. EDT. Under the new rules, U.S. citizens who have traveled in China within the last 14 days will be re-routed to one of eight designated airports, where they will undergo enhanced health screening procedures. The eight are: John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York; Chicago O'Hare International Airport; San Francisco International Airport; Seattle-Tacoma International Airport; Daniel K. Inouye International Airport in Honolulu; Los Angeles International Airport in California; Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport; and Washington-Dulles International Airport in Virginia. Starting Monday, Newark Liberty International Airport in New Jersey, Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport and Detroit Metropolitan

Airport will be added to the list. U.S. citizens who have been in Hubei province within 14 days of their return will be subject to up to 14 days of mandatory quarantine. The outbreak originated in that province. U.S. citizens who have been in other areas of China within the last 14 days will undergo "proactive entry health screening" and up to 14 days of "self-quarantine." Meanwhile, most non-U.S. citizens who have traveled in China within the last 14 days will be denied entry into the United States, except for immediate family members of U.S. citizens, permanent residents and flight crew. "While the overall risk to the American public remains low, funneling all flights with passengers who have recently been in China is the most important and prudent step we can take at this time to decrease the strain on public health officials screening incoming travelers," said Chad Wolf, the acting DHS secretary. "We realize this could provide added stress and prolong travel times for some individuals, however public health and security experts agree these measures are necessary to contain the virus and protect the American people," Wolf said. Asked in an interview aired Sunday on Fox how concerned he was

over the outbreak, President Donald Trump said that "we pretty much shut it down coming in from China." "We've offered China help, but we can't have thousands of people coming in who may have this problem, the coronavirus," Trump said. "So we're gonna see what happens, but we did shut it down, yes." □



A pedestrian wears a protective mask in Alhambra, Calif., Friday, Jan. 31, 2020.

Associated Press



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Confusion over what data schools can provide for 2020 Census

By **MIKE SCHNEIDER**
Associated Press

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — The U.S. Census Bureau this week starts its process of counting students living in college-run housing, but there's confusion over what demographic information university officials can share with the agency.

Two weeks ago, the U.S. Department of Education said in a memo to schools that they couldn't, if asked, provide information about students' sex, race and Hispanic origin for the 2020 Census. Now the department says schools are able to furnish such data if they strip away anything that could identify a student.

The department's new position was issued last week in a revision of a memo it sent out last month to universities about how students living in college housing should be counted.

The 2020 Census form "asks for information about the student's sex, Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin, and race," said the original memo issued on Jan. 14. "However, school officials may not disclose this information, without prior written consent from the student."

The revised memo says schools can furnish the demographic information provided "such data is de-identified."

The memo's author, Kala Suprenant, acting director of the Student Privacy Policy Office, and the agency's press office, didn't immediately respond Sunday to emails inquiring about the reason for the change. The revised memo noted that the office had received



In this Tuesday, Jan. 28, 2020 photo, Leon Hayner, an associate dean of students at Rollins College looks over requests from the U.S. Census Bureau in Winter Park, Fla.

Associated Press

questions from universities about the earlier memo.

Much is at stake: the 2020 count will help determine the allocation of \$1.5 trillion in federal spending and how many congressional seats each state gets.

The last Census in 2010 found more than 2.5 million students living in dorms or on-campus fraternity of sorority houses, the largest segment of what the Census Bureau refers to as "group quarters," which also include prisons, jails and nursing homes.

And because of the difficulty in counting students, the Census Bureau will start reaching out to college campuses this week to collect information about student housing. The 2020 count started last month in rural Alaska, and the rest of the nation won't begin participating until mid-March.

At risk is getting a complete count of the students living in college-run housing. Under the old version of the memo, a decades-old privacy law would have prohibited schools from providing the Census Bureau with information on students' sex, race and Hispanic origin, if the students didn't fill out the forms asking about those demographic details. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act says students need to provide written consent before information from their records can be shared, but an exception is made for what is called "directory information."

Directory information includes facts often found in student handbooks or yearbooks, such as names, addresses, telephone numbers, dates of birth, activities and dates of at-

tendance. Directory information doesn't include sex, race or Hispanic origin, and the school can't provide any information about students who have opted out of sharing directory information.

The Census Bureau is giving campuses three ways to fill out the forms. A census taker can drop off paper forms to a university liaison to distribute to students, and then the students return them in sealed envelopes so the liaison can hand them back to the census taker.

A census taker can knock on doors in the dorm or house and personally interview residents, the most costly method. Or, a university representative can fill out the form for everyone living there using administrative records — the most efficient method.

In 2010, more than a third of students in college housing were counted through administrative records provided by the university.

"The data that comes from administrative records is never as accurate as information collected directly from individuals and households," said Terri Ann Lowenthal, a consultant and former top congressional aide specializing in the census.

Students who live off-campus can fill out the forms as those in other households would.

In a statement, the Census Bureau said it expected to get most of its information about on-campus students from the "drop off/ pick up" method.

Counting college students in group housing is tricky. Students sometimes leave campus as the school semester winds down during the count and students often don't know if they should answer the form or let their parents do it back home. The Census Bureau says students should be counted where they live, which in most cases is where the students go to school.

This is the first year the Census Bureau is encouraging a majority of respondents to answer the once-a-decade questionnaire online, although they still can answer by telephone or by mailing in a paper form.

But students living in college housing, perhaps the group most likely to answer questions online, will be given paper forms. Cutbacks in research and testing for group quarters led to that decision, Lowenthal said. □

Report: San Diego secures \$300M to intercept Mexico sewage

SAN DIEGO (AP) — The San Diego region will get \$300 million in federal funding for a new U.S. facility to capture sewage spills from Mexico before they foul shorelines north of the border, according to a newspaper report Sunday. Congressional leaders announced the funding in December, but it wasn't clear whether the money would be distributed across the entire Southwest border or dedicated specifically to address pollution in the Tijuana River Valley just south of San Diego County, the Los Angeles Times reported. Now officials believe most — if not all — of the money will be doled out in and around the San Diego area, thanks to language

included in the overhaul of the North American Free Trade Agreement signed by President Trump on Jan. 29, the newspaper said. "This is a huge, huge deal," said Imperial Beach Mayor Serge Dedina.

Toxic water pollution from Mexico has shuttered shorelines in Imperial Beach and other San Diego County areas more than 500 days over the last three years, according to court papers cited by the Times. The approach is a shift from longstanding efforts to help Mexico maintain its wastewater system in Tijuana. Last summer, top officials with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency visited San Diego to lay out a blueprint with several op-



In a Wednesday, Dec. 12, 2018 file photo, a couple walk along the beach as signs warn of contaminated water at Imperial Beach, Calif.

Associated Press

tions for how to address the pollution.

Since then, local leaders have pushed to build a \$400 million facility north of the border to intercept and treat the pollution. It's been estimated the project could reduce cross-border flows from roughly 138 days a year on average, down

to about 12.

San Diego Mayor Kevin Faulconer promised that the money would be used to "clean up the sewage spills from the Tijuana River Valley once and for all." Faulconer was present when Trump signed the agreement at the White House last week. □

Mathematicians, geeks celebrate rare palindrome day

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — Mathematicians and geeks everywhere celebrated a rare occurrence Sunday, 02/02/2020, a kind of 8-digit palindrome that hasn't happened for more than 900 years.

A palindrome is any sequence, phrase or word that reads the same backward as forward. And 02/02/2020 is considered a "universal palindrome" because it reads the same whether written as "Month/Day/Year" as the United States does, or "Day/Month/Year" as many other countries do.

The last universal palindrome occurred on 11/11/1111. The next one won't come until 12/12/2121. "It's possible to live your entire life without ever having gone through a universal palindrome, so it's pretty cool to have one in your lifetime," said Heather Pierce, a mathematics lecturer at Emmanuel College in Boston.

The date was cause for cel-

ebration on Twitter, where even those who don't specialize in math got a kick out of the rare global palindrome.

"Another one won't happen for 101 years, so make the most of this one!" tweeted actor Mark Hamill of "Star Wars" fame.

"Are you guys pumped? The big day is finally here!!" tweeted musical comedian "Weird Al" Yankovic.

"Right now people all across the country are getting together with friends and loved ones to celebrate - so exciting. Anyway, from my house to yours, Happy Palindrome Day!"

The Royal Wedding Chapel in Las Vegas was hoping the date would have special meaning for many couples. The chapel noted in its advertising that couples who marry on 02/02/2020 would have their two-year anniversaries on 02/02/2022. "Two being the ultimate symbolic number representing you and your spouse to be." □

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Man wearing fake bomb stabs 2 in London and is shot to death

By GREGORY KATZ and DANICA KIRKA

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — A man recently released from prison after serving time for terrorism-related offenses strapped on a fake bomb and stabbed two people on a busy London street Sunday before being shot to death by police, officials said.

Deputy Assistant Commissioner Lucy D'Orsi said police are "confident" the attacker was 20-year-old Sudesh Amman.

He had been convicted for publishing graphic terrorist videos online and had stockpiled instructions on bomb making and knife attacks, according to police.

"The suspect had been recently released from prison where he had been serving a sentence for Islamist-related terrorism offences," she said.

The afternoon incident in London recalled a November stabbing attack carried out by another man who had served prison time for terrorism offense. Two were killed in that attack.



A police forensic officer works near the scene after a stabbing incident in Streatham London, England, Sunday, Feb. 2, 2020.

Associated Press

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said measures will be introduced Monday to bring "fundamental" change to the way people convicted of terrorism offenses are handled in prison and afterward.

It seems likely the victims

will survive Sunday's attack in the bustling commercial and residential south London neighborhood of Streatham, where Amman struck outside a major pharmacy on a busy shopping afternoon.

D'Orsi said a stabbing victim in his 40s thought to be in life-threatening condition has improved.

She said the victim is no longer in danger and that a woman who had been hospitalized has been released.

One other female victim is still in the hospital with lesser injuries police believe were caused by flying glass after the attacker was shot dead.

D'Orsi said the incident started at 2 p.m. when Amman was already being trailed by police.

"Armed officers, who were part of a proactive counterterrorism operation and were following the suspect on foot, were in immediate attendance and shot a male suspect dead at the scene," she said.

She said police saw a device strapped to the attacker's body and called in specialist officers who quickly determined the purported explosive device was a hoax.

Officials praised the police action but questions are

likely to be raised about why the officers trailing Amman could not prevent his attack.

Video from the scene appeared to show three undercover police officers in an unmarked car making a quick stop just after the attack.

Bell Reberio-Addy, a member of Parliament who represents Streatham, said the attacker had been under surveillance "for some time."

D'Orsi said there was no "continuing danger" to the public, but the area remained cordoned off as the investigation continued.

The usually busy area was deserted as the public heeded police requests to stay away.

The drama about 5 miles (8 kilometers) south of central London marked a departure from recent terror attacks in the British capital that took place near landmarks such as London Bridge and the Houses of Parliament.

The attack caused chaos and panic on what had been a typical Sunday afternoon, with the streets filled with shoppers.

Karker Tahir said he was at work when he saw police chasing a man down Streatham High Road, the

area's main shopping district. "They kept telling him, 'Stop! Stop!'" Tahir said. "But he didn't stop, and then I saw that they shot him three times. It was horrible seeing it."

The man was on the floor and it looked like he had something, which police said may be a device.

Police came to us and said, 'You have to leave the shop because he has a bomb in his bag.'"

Images shared on social media showed a man lying on the sidewalk outside a pharmacy.

Stephen Roberts, a former deputy commissioner for the Metropolitan Police, said if the stabbings were carried out by a "self-starter" — someone acting alone — it means any city in the country is vulnerable to a similar sort of low-tech attack.

In November, British authorities lowered the national terror threat level to "substantial," meaning an attack is considered likely. That is the third-highest rung in a five-step system used by British authorities and marked the first time since August 2014 that the threat level had been so low.

It was lowered because of the belief that the threat of British jihadis returning to the country from Syria had been reduced by events there, including the Islamic State group's loss of territory.

It is not clear if the two attacks since then will lead the independent analysts who make recommendation to the government to suggest raising the level. London Mayor Sadiq Khan urged community resolve in the face of another attack.

"Terrorists seek to divide us and to destroy our way of life," he said. "Here in London we will never let them succeed."

Also Sunday, police in Belgium shot a woman who stabbed and wounded passersby in the city of Ghent, but prosecutors said there was no suspicion of terrorism or a link to what happened in London. □



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China reports 361 dead from new virus, total of 17,205 cases

BEIJING (AP) — China on Monday reported 361 have died on the mainland from the new virus, with an additional 2,829 new cases over the last 24 hours bringing the Chinese total to 17,205. The latest figures Monday come a day after the first death from the illness was recorded outside China, in the Philippines, as countries around the world evacuated hundreds of their citizens from the infection zone.

Chinese authorities completed a new, rapidly constructed 1,000-bed hospital for victims of the outbreak and delayed the reopening of schools in the hardest-hit province. Restrictions were tightened still further in one city by allowing only one family member to venture out to buy supplies every other day.

The Philippine Health Department said a 44-year-old Chinese man from Wuhan, the city at the center of the crisis, was hospitalized Jan. 25 with a fever, cough and sore throat and died after developing severe pneumonia. The man's 38-year-old female companion, also from Wuhan, tested positive for the virus as well and remained hospitalized in isolation in Manila.

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte approved a ban on the entry of all non-citizens from China. The U.S., Japan, Singapore and Australia have imposed similar restrictions despite criticism from China and an assessment from the World Health Organization that such measures were unnecessarily hurting trade and travel.

The vast majority of those infected are in China; about 150 cases have been reported in two dozen other countries.

The U.S. on Sunday reported its ninth case, this one involving a woman in the San Francisco Bay Area's Santa Clara County who arrived in the U.S. to visit family after recently traveling to Wuhan.

A hospital specially built

to handle coronavirus patients in Wuhan is expected to open on Monday, just 10 days after construction began.

A second hospital is set to open soon after.

Also, six officials in the city of Huanggang, next to Wuhan in Hubei province, were fired over "poor performance" in handling the outbreak, the official Xinhua News Agency reported. It cited the mayor as saying the city's "capabilities to treat the patients remained inadequate and there is a severe shortage in medical supplies such as protective suits and medical masks."

The trading and manufacturing center of Wenzhou, with nearly 10 million people in coastal Zhejiang province, confined people to their homes, allowing only one family member to venture out every other day to buy necessary supplies. Huanggang, home to 7 million people, imposed similar measures on Saturday.

With no end in sight to the outbreak, authorities in Hubei and elsewhere have extended the Lunar New Year holiday break, due to end this week, well into February to try to keep people at home and reduce the spread of the virus. All Hubei schools are postponing the start of the new semester until further notice.

The crisis is the latest to confront Chinese leader Xi Jinping, who has been beset by months of anti-government protests in Hong Kong, the re-election of Taiwan's pro-independence president and criticism over human rights violations in the traditionally Muslim territory of Xinjiang. Meanwhile, the domestic economy continues to slow, weighed down by slowing demand and the trade war with Washington. New Zealand announced Sunday it is temporarily barring travelers from China to protect the South Pacific region from the virus.

The 14-day ban applies to foreigners leaving China

but not to New Zealand residents. New Zealand also raised its travel advice for China to "Do not travel," the highest level.

Qatar Airways joined the growing number of airlines suspending flights to mainland China. Indonesia and Oman also halted flights, as did Saudi Arabia's flagship national carrier, Saudia.

Saudi Arabia's state-run media reported that 10 Saudi students were evacuated from Wuhan on a special flight. It said the students would be screened on arrival and quarantined for 14 days.

Over the weekend, South Korea and India flew hundreds of their citizens out of Wuhan. A Turkish mili-



A family wearing protective masks crosses a street in Mandaluyong, east of Manila, Philippines on Sunday, Feb. 2, 2020.

Associated Press

tary transport plane carrying 42 people arrived in Ankara on Saturday night. A French-chartered plane made its way toward France on Sunday with 300 evacuees from a multitude of European and African countries. And Morocco

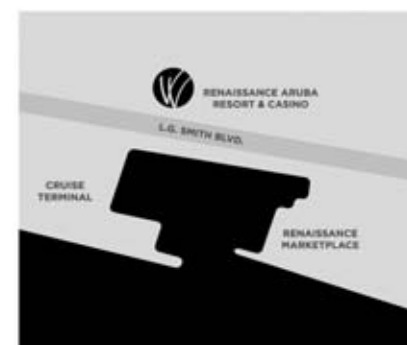
flew home 167 of its people, mostly students.

Indonesia flew back 241 citizens from Wuhan on Sunday and quarantined them on the remote Natuna Islands for two weeks. Several hundred residents protested the move. □



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Uneasy quiet in Mideast, month after Iran strike against U.S.

By LOLITA C. BALDOR

Associated Press

ABOARD THE USS HARRY S. TRUMAN (AP) — Nearly a

month after Iran launched a rare direct military attack against United States forces in Iraq, an uneasy quiet has settled across the Mideast.

Watching fighter jets roar off the flight deck of the aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman, the top U.S. commander for the region believes he is surrounded by one of the reasons that Iran has dialed back its combat stance, at least for now.

"You're here because we don't want a war with Iran and nothing makes a potential adversary think twice about war than the presence of an aircraft carrier and the strike group that comes with it," Marine Gen. Frank McKenzie told the nearly 5,000 service members on board the 100,000-ton ship. "So, we achieve deterrence, which is preventing Iran from starting a war."

Patrolling through the North Arabian Sea, the Truman was about 150 miles (240 kilometers) from Iran when McKenzie and a small number of staff flew aboard on Saturday. His overnight stay



Marine Gen. Frank McKenzie, top U.S. commander for the Middle East, right, listens as Lt. Maguel Brooks, the USS Harry S. Truman's handler, left, explains the movement of aircraft on the aircraft carrier's flight deck, on board the USS Harry S. Truman aircraft carrier in the North Arabian Sea, Saturday, Feb. 1, 2020.

Associated Press

on the ship underscored his belief that the additional ships, aircraft, weapons systems and thousands of troops that the U.S. has poured into the region in recent months deliver a message. It's one he thinks Iran has received.

Since Iran launched a flurry

of ballistic missiles at U.S. forces in Iraq in retaliation for an American drone strike that killed a top Iranian general, there has been a visible reduction in Tehran's military posture, McKenzie said.

He said Iran brought its ballistic missile force and its air defenses back down from a heightened state of readiness. Also, the level of harassment and other activity by Iran's naval forces around the congested Strait of Hormuz has been scaled back.

The drone strike that killed Qassem Soleimani, the top Quds Force general, showed that the U.S. is willing to take action, and the arrival of the Truman and the other warships had underscored that, he said.

"When an aircraft carrier is in your neighborhood you know it," said Navy Capt. Kavon Hakimzadeh, the Truman's commanding officer.

He said his ship left Norfolk, Virginia, in mid-November and "almost made a beeline for the Suez Canal."

Now, as they maneuver off the coast of Oman, a steady stream of fighter jets, surveillance aircraft and helicopters launch off

the 4.5 acre (1.8 hectare) flight deck, conducting a show of force that also allows them to keep up their training in case they are needed for combat.

"We're practicing our craft," said Hakimzadeh, or Capt. Hak, as he is known on the ship. "Our job is to fuel up, load up and launch airplanes. The only real change is whether or not the airplanes come back with bombs or not."

So far they haven't dropped any bombs. Some of the ships are taking part in the maritime coalition that is safeguarding the Strait of Hormuz, in the wake of Iranian attacks against commercial vessels last year. Others protect the carrier.

From the bridge, where McKenzie spoke to the crew over the ship's loudspeakers, he could look out at the horizon and see the USS Normandy. The weapons-loaded warship stands as a sentry between the carrier and Iran. Out of view were four American Navy destroyers. Another warship loaded with Marines is further up the Red Sea.

Despite widespread demands for U.S. Navy ships in other parts of the world,

McKenzie requested and received a much larger than usual naval presence in his area. Both the Truman and the USS Bataan steamed rapidly across the Mediterranean to get to the Gulf region, and in a somewhat rare move, one of the destroyers assigned to Europe, the USS Carney, was shifted south to join the Truman.

McKenzie and other commanders on the ship acknowledge that deterrence is a hard thing to measure.

But speaking to F/A-18 fighter pilots in their ready room, McKenzie mapped out the timeline. Last April and May, he said, Iranian leadership decided to begin more active offensive military operations in the region.

In the succeeding months, there were attacks on ships in the Gulf, a pipeline in Saudi Arabia and, on Sept. 14, strikes on Saudi oil facilities. The violence spurred U.S. Defense Secretary Mark Esper to beef up the military presence in the Gulf.

Esper, however, has made it clear that America's top defense priorities are threats from China and Russia, and he is looking to send more forces to the Pacific region. For McKenzie, that means frequent discussions with defense leaders about his assessment of the Iranian threat in the Middle East and why he needs the forces he has.

"You know what I associate with that period of time," said McKenzie, referring to early last spring. "There was no carrier" in the region.

Now, he said, there is a "rough kind of stability" in the region. But he is reluctant to say how long that will last, or how long he will be able to hold onto the military might he's accumulated.

And over the loudspeaker, he made that uncertainty clear to the Truman crew.

"One thing I know everybody wants to know is how long you're gonna be here," he said. "So I'm gonna be honest with you. I don't know." □

France to send extra 600 troops to fight Sahel extremists

Associated Press

France will deploy 600 additional soldiers in the African Sahel region to combat extremists, raising the amount of troops there to 5,100, the country's defense minister said Sunday. In a statement, Defense Minister Florence Parly said most of the reinforcements to the Barkhane force will be deployed in the three borders zone between Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger.

"Another part of these reinforcements will be directly engaged within the G5 Sahel forces to accompany them in combat," she said. Parly added that Chad "should soon deploy an additional battalion" within the joint force of the G5 Sahel, which brings together Mauritania, Mali, Burkina



French Minister of Armed Forces Florence Parly speaks during a news conference at the Pentagon in Washington, Monday, Jan. 27, 2020, with Secretary of Defense Mark Esper.

Associated Press

Faso, Niger and Chad in the three borders zone. It's the epicenter of the fight against jihadist groups, including Islamic State in the Grand Sahara (ISIS-GS). □

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Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson, right, meets the President of Nigeria Muhammadu Buhari during the UK-Africa Investment Summit in London, Monday, Jan. 20, 2020.

Associated Press

Nigeria to address issues that led to visa restrictions

By SAM OLUKOYA
Associated Press

LAGOS, Nigeria (AP) — Nigeria's government pledged Saturday to try to address security issues the Trump administration cited in its decision to stop granting immigration visas to people from Africa's most populous nation. Immigrants from Nigeria and three other countries no longer will be eligible for visas allowing them to live in the United States permanently, the White House said Friday.

They would still qualify for tourist and business visas, but Nigerians rarely are granted those now because the U.S. says too many visitors from the West African country overstay their visas. Nigerians, who have long decried the visa application processes in both the United States and Europe as racist, expressed disbelief and anger after the Trump administration announced the new policy, which takes effect Feb. 21. Okorafor Chimedu, a 29-year-old teacher in Warri, Nigeria, called it a "collective punishment." Chi-

medu has a university degree and relatives already living in the United States to sponsor him but knows his odds of relocating are now slim unless something changes.

"I hope the two nations will rectify their differences soon so that the ban can be lifted," he said. "We need each other to progress in this world. No man is an island of his own."

The U.S. government said it decided to impose new visa restrictions on a total of six more countries that failed to meet minimum security requirements for verifying travelers' identities and whether individuals posed a national security threat.

Immigrant visas were targeted because people with those visas are the most difficult to remove after they arrive in the United States, U.S. officials said.

Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari has established a committee "to study and address the updated U.S. requirements," presidential spokesman Femi Adesina said Saturday. □



In this photo taken Saturday, Feb. 1, 2020, a plane spraying pesticides flies over a swarm of desert locusts in Nasuulu Conservancy, northern Kenya.

Associated Press

Spray planes combat the huge locust outbreak in East Africa

By J. MWIHIA, J. KASIRE and B. CURTIS
Associated Press

NASUULU CONSERVANCY, Kenya (AP) — As locusts by the billions — yes, billions — descend on parts of Kenya in the worst outbreak in 70 years, small planes are flying low over affected areas to spray pesticides in what experts call the only effective control. It is challenging work, especially in remote areas where mobile phone signals are absent and ground crews cannot quickly communicate coordinates to flight teams. The ground crews are in "the most woeful terrains," Marcus Dunn, a pilot and the director at Farmland Aviation, said Saturday. "If there is no network, then the fellow on a boda boda (motorcycle), he has to rush off now and go and get a network."

Just five planes are currently spraying as Kenyan and other authorities try to stop the locusts from spreading to neighboring Uganda and South Sudan. The United Nations has said \$76 million is needed immediately to widen such efforts across East Africa.

A fast response is crucial. Experts warn that if left unchecked, the number of locusts could grow by 500 times by June, when drier weather will help bring the outbreak under control.

The finger-length locusts swept into Kenya from Somalia and Ethiopia after unusually

heavy rains in recent months, decimating crops in some areas and threatening millions of vulnerable people with a hunger crisis.

Somalia's agriculture ministry on Sunday called the outbreak a national emergency and major threat to the country's fragile food security, saying the "uncommonly large" locust swarms are consuming huge amounts of crops.

In swarms the size of major cities, the locusts also have affected parts of Sudan, Djibouti and Eritrea, whose agriculture ministry says both the military and general public have been deployed to combat them. Kenya's agriculture minister has acknowledged that authorities weren't prepared for the scope of the infestation this year. That's not surprising, considering it's been decades since the country's last comparable outbreak, U.N. officials say. The locusts also are heading toward the breadbasket of Ethiopia, Africa's second-most populous country, in that nation's worst outbreak in 25 years. On Thursday, startled residents of Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa, started reported sightings of the insects.

"I was surprised to find the locusts inside my living room," said one resident, Mathewos Girma, showing a photo on his mobile phone. "It appears it is knocking on each and every one of our doors." □

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Guaidó rallies Venezuelan expats in Miami at end of tour

By GISELA SALOMON and SCOTT SMITH

Associated Press

MIAMI, Florida (AP) — Venezuela's Juan Guaidó told a large crowd of cheering expatriates in Miami on Saturday that he will soon make his return to Caracas from an international tour, bringing with him the "world's backing" to oust President Nicolás Maduro. "We have a plan. We have a strategy," Guaidó said. "We're not alone, and we're going to restore democracy."

The opposition leader bent on unseating the socialist president, however, presented few details for executing this plan upon returning, referring to additional sanctions as a major strategy available.

Guaidó's visit to Miami rounds out a two-week world tour that took him first to Colombia, then across Europe and Canada, where he held meetings with a list of world leaders. He delivered a message that Venezuelans are pressing for freedom from a "dictator," but they need help. A key meeting absent from Guaidó's trip was with his most important ally, President Donald Trump, who earlier in the day tweeted

a picture of himself golfing at his Florida Mar-a-Lago club, saying he was "Get-

are things that are not talked about. All necessary actions will be used to finally

led National Assembly. In this position he claimed presidential powers, vow-

zuela Affairs Unit of the U.S. Embassy in Bogota, Colombia. The opposition leader also mingled with Venezuelans who have fled their homeland for the United States over the last two decades.

Florida Republican Sen. Rick Scott was among those on stage with Guaidó as well as several Venezuelan lawmakers now living in exile. Florida Sen. Marco Rubio said on Twitter that he would be meeting with Guaidó.

Many at the rally wore baseball hats with bright yellow, blue and red, representing the colors of Venezuela's flag. When Guaidó stepped on stage, they cheered and held up their phones for photos.

"We want him to tell us what's going to happen," said Gloria Bejaramo, 65, who traveled from Venezuela to South Florida to visit a daughter. "I've always supported him, and everyone is looking for a way out of this situation to achieve democracy."

Native Venezuelan Jorge Márquez, 30, traveled with two friends from his adopted home in Houston to Miami to show their support for Guaidó.

"We're a people who don't give up — don't rest," said Marquez, who said he protested against socialist rule as a university student in Venezuela before arriving to the United States in 2014 requesting political asylum. Guaidó launched the international tour, defying a travel ban imposed against him by Maduro's government. □



Venezuela's interim President Juan Guaidó speaks to the media after a rally in Miami, Saturday, Feb. 1, 2020.

Associated Press

ting a little exercise."

When asked about a possible meeting with Trump, Guaidó said: "Stay tuned," but he also said he was already preparing his return to Venezuela.

An estimated 3,500 people crowded into a Miami convention center to hear Guaidó, the most promising opposition political figure to surface in years with the chance of ending two decades of rule launched by the late President Hugo Chávez. Guaidó urged the crowd to remain unified and to resist, despite living away from Venezuela.

"All options are on the table, but also under the table," Guaidó said. "There

liberate Venezuela."

Venezuela was once an energy powerhouse with the world's largest oil reserves, but crude production has plummeted over the last two decades, which critics blame on corruption and mismanagement.

Today, an estimated 4.5 million Venezuelans have emigrated from the country of 30 million, leaving behind crumbling infrastructure, broken hospitals, power failures and gasoline shortages with mile-long lines at filling stations across much of the South American nation.

Guaidó, 36, rose a year ago to prominence, named leader of the opposition-

ing to oust Maduro and reverse the political and social crisis.

He won backing from the U.S. and nearly 60 nations that considered Maduro's 2018 election a fraud and blamed his socialist policies for the crisis that's driving mass migration and threatening the region's stability. Maduro, however, has maintained power with firm backing of the military and key foreign allies, including China, Cuba and Turkey. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov is expected to visit Caracas in the coming days.

Before the rally, Guaidó met with James Story, chargé d'affaires for the Vene-





“I love to observe people and see if they fit”

EAGLE BEACH — Casa del Mar Beach Resort & Timeshare offers you paradise: an oceanfront location on the white sands of Eagle Beach, the amazing aquamarine Caribbean ocean, wonderfully luxurious oceanfront, or poolside timesharing suites with a world of amenities like a spa, restaurant, and a fitness center. The Human Resources department recruited a young and dynamic lady who loves her job and claims that Casa del Mar is the greatest working environment. Meet Sherrah Stacey Ponson!

Sherrah started working with Casa del Mar officially July 1st, 2019. “I was an intern from January to July. Before that I was attending an intercontinental Caribbean University in Curacao, studies Hospitality and International Administration.” At Human Resources department she is responsible for any applicants that apply for a job. She helps them look for the position that they want and fill in the form. “From there I will send it to the managers and they will talk it over with me if the person is eligible for the position. Then we continue with the interview process and go to the next step which is the hiring. Besides that, I assist in organizing events for the employees, do administration tasks and of course help with the payroll. There are like a lot of things to it, it is a very diverse position.”

Make others smile

She says that every day is exciting, she loves it here at Casa del Mar Beach Resort & Timeshare. “I like to know different people and learn about the psychological side of the job. To observe people and see if they fit. I do the pre-selection and I am aware of my responsibility.” She explains that they are not super strict on education but what catches them in an interview is the attitude. Jolly and ready to work are the characteristics of the kind of people they need. “In the hospitality industry, we need people that make other people smile.”

Applicants are mostly nervous to her noticing. “Especially with the current situation in Venezuela you see that Venezuelan applicants really need the job which is hard sometimes. We feel how hard it is to them, but we also see that giving someone a change makes a huge difference.” Not all hotels have that bunch of open positions, but every time Sherrah and her colleagues have someone in and they do not have that job open they direct them to other resorts. “There is more demand for jobs than offerings she sees, but mostly these are Venezuelans without permission so it is problematic. “But we try to help wherever we can.”

Genuine work place

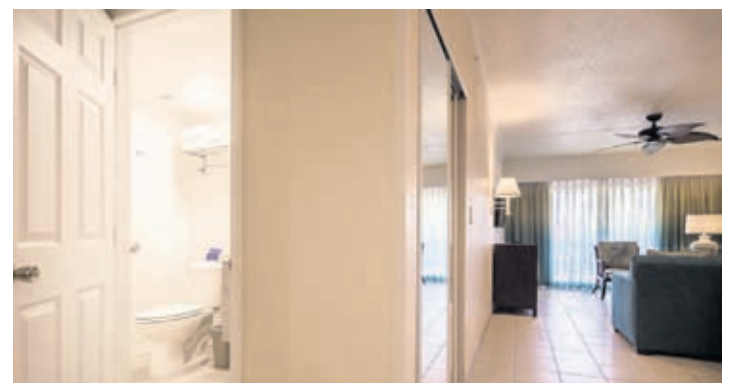
As a young lady with a fresh look she notices that the environment within the resort is very warm, or in her own words: dushi which means nice or pleasant in Papiamentu. “All departments have this typical connected energy and show love for their colleagues.” It is a genuine working place and you do not find that type of atmosphere anywhere else she states. “You feel happy to work every single day and being part of this resort.”

Sherrah's dream

Sherrah's dream always was to be an event/wedding planner or working in HR. “So I am living it, my dream. But there is more to it. I would like to make life at its best for employees and continue accommodating their satisfaction and motivation. Also I definitely think that we as a company should contribute to local community.” Last year one of Casa del Mar's employees in the Accounting Department initiated to help some families in need around Christmas time. The employees gave donations and because of that Casa del Mar Beach Resort & Timeshare was able to provide 25 children from different schools with school supplies. “It was an amazing experience and we as HR will focus more on community work this year.” □



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Full laughter at Aruba Ray Ellin's phenomenal show Top American standup comics give a fantastic performance

EAGLE BEACH — The "Aruba Ray's Comedy" show features some of the funniest American standup comedians in a terrific 90-minute show, and Aruba Today was there and had a blast. The show is now on at the Holiday Inn Resort Aruba from January 9th until February 13th. It all begins and ends with host Ray Ellin. You will be amazed with his quick wit, sharp tongue and hilarious observations of the public, memorizing every targeted person in the audience throughout the whole show. Three top comedians took care of a full laughter show where you forget all your worries and walk out with a happy smile.



Celebrating six years of Excellence in Aruba, Aruba Ray's Comedy is the number one rated Night Time

Activity on TripAdvisor, the number one rated Show on TripAdvisor, and the number one rated Fun Activity on TripAdvisor. The show was named as one of USA Today's "10 Best". This is the same caliber show you would find at a top comedy clubs in NYC. The line-up is truly some of the best and hottest comedians from the United States. This wonderful show is the best

way to spend a night out "off-the-town", so to speak. The line-up during our visit was Brian Scott McFadden from CBS' "The Late Show", Kathleen Dunbar from "Last Comic Standing" and Lenny Marcus from NBC's "Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon." All three were simply the greatest in their own unique style.

Continued on Page 15

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Full laughter at Aruba Ray Ellin's phenomenal show Top American standup comics give fantastic performance

Continued from Page 14

The setting is great in which you are seated close to the stage thus being able to see the faces of the comedians, in the case of Dunbar a must because she makes the funniest faces. The dry humor of Marcus, the brash jokes of Dunbar, and the hilarious characters and voices of McFadden all rocked. Ellin

is a great host, welcoming the audience personally at the entrance and shaking hands after the show. He is the considered to be one of the best comedians of improvisation, and you will understand why, he was outstanding. We felt truly relaxed and happy after nearly two hours of gut-busting laughter and forgetting everything else.

Ray Ellin is considered by his peers to be the best host in NYC, and Ray is also known as "Aruba Ray" because of his passion for Aruba. Ray has been coming to Aruba every month for the past seven years, where he produces and hosts these incredible comedy shows. Already popular in New York, the comedian has brought his talent and some of his colleagues to Aruba. He is



also an executive producer of the television show "This Week at the Comedy Celar" on Comedy Central, which is about to begin its third season.

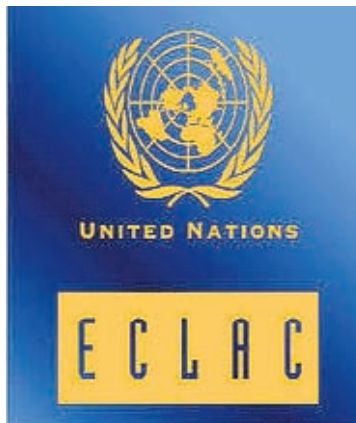
Catch the show nightly at

8:30pm until February 13th in Holiday Inn Resort Aruba. Doors open at 8pm. Check out Aruba Today newspaper to keep track of the schedule. You may also find updates at www.ArubaComedy.com. □





United Nations, Economic commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC): New technologies bring governments closer to the people



PORT-OF-SPAIN, TRINIDAD TOBAGO — The use of innovative use of information and communication technology (ICT) tools is facilitating access to central government resources for people living in remote locations across the Caribbean.

Roughly one third of Caribbean Small Island develop-

ing States (SIDS) and territories can be described as multi-island jurisdictions, most of which encounter challenges which are less severe in single-island Caribbean countries. Their archipelagic nature means that their populations are dispersed over more than one island and that their already small economies are fragmented. In addi-



tion, they present various one-island governance structures and institutions, empowered with differing degrees of autonomy in decision-making.

improve connectivity and access to technology. However, more than half of households in the Caribbean still lack access to the internet.

Despite these challenges, ICT can help to support the efficient delivery of public services in multi-island jurisdictions in the areas of health, education and governance. This, according to a new study from ECLAC Caribbean entitled, 'Strengthening ICT and knowledge management capacity in support of the sustainable development of multi-island Caribbean SIDS'.

As a result, the effectiveness of efforts to use e-government to reach populations has been mixed and use of these tools inconsistent. The quality of such access is also an issue in the region, with connection speeds improving but not keeping pace with the rest of the world. Where internet access exists, use of this technology does not always follow due to lack of affordability, skills or relevant local content.

The study found that the application of ICTs in government for delivering public services, can improve efficiency in the delivery of government services across islands. Moreover, it can minimize the impact of distance between islands, and the constraints of diseconomies of scale.

Governments in the region have already started to embrace e-government and implement regional and national initiatives to

Thus, e-government still presents many untapped opportunities for improving public service delivery and governance outcomes in small or outlying islands of multi-island States. To seize these opportunities, the ECLAC Caribbean's study highlights that systems and service delivery approaches must be tailored to local needs and to the capacity of existing ICT infrastructure and include adequate training and support. □

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The United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, known as ECLAC, UNECLAC or in Spanish and Portuguese CEPAL, is a United Nations regional commission to encourage economic cooperation.

Hotel Hustle

Column by: Shanella Pantophlet

Shenanigans

ORANJESTAD — People on vacation can get themselves in some of the most interesting situations. Every now and again you'll have a mundane week interrupted by news of something incredulous that a guest did. Some of it is funny like the couple so drunk the guy was giving his girlfriend a piggyback ride and then missed the sliding glass doors and bumped into the wall, leading to her falling on her butt. Both laughing it off as they walk by the desk and ensure us they're fine.



There's also the people who decided to try and skinny dip only to be seen by others on the 2nd floor balcony and be reported by security. Hearing this story in the morning meeting was certainly entertaining. No judgement, you're on vacation and nobody knows you so why not have some fun. It perks up my day, wondering what was going on in your head at the moment. Of course it's not only our young and free guests that get themselves into these situations.

Sometimes however these shenanigans can go a bit too far and lead to personal injury. I remember at least one case of someone so drunk they stumbled and fell into a cactus plant, stood up and fell right back into it. The story alone made me wince, but the video was even worse to watch, luckily this person

was so drunk I don't think they actually felt it. I'm sure the hangover and pain the next morning was completely unpleasant.

Some people aren't even drunk they just like to have a good time. There was a day we came into work and there were all these random pictures of people hung up on the office doors. Getting closer you realize there's writing under the pictures and one guest is obviously playing a prank on one of their friends. To answer the question, staff can assist in setting up harmless fun pranks, we like to have a good time and see people laughing too.

My favorite has to be this one group, who come down every year and are always plotting pool deck pranks on their friends. The best one being the case of the mysteriously appearing toilet that ended up under a chickee,

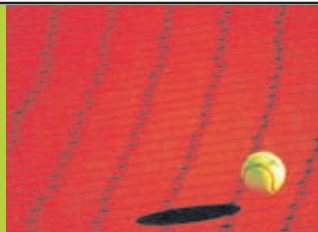
while all the pool furniture from that chickee was nowhere to be found. I must admit, hearing about this and subsequently seeing the perpetrators on camera had me cracking up to the point of being unable to breath. Just the sight of these toilet ninjas inconspicuously carrying a toilet they'd borrowed from maintenance over to this hut, you can see how much planning went into this and the timing and efficiency. I applaud the effort and execution. I look forward to the next prank.

All of these little surprises make the work day a bit more entertaining for us and as long as people are safe, having fun and enjoying their vacation it's all the better. So all you good people continue to go forth and be goofy. Just please do it in view of the security cameras for everyone's benefit. □



Aruban born and bred Shanella Pantophlet is passionate about tourism. That is the world she studied and works in, so we might as well call her a specialist. Luckily for Aruba Today Shanella also loves to write. And together with the fact that the majority of our readers are tourists, we found ourselves a perfect combination for a column: Hotel Hustle.

SPORTS



San Francisco 49ers' Kyle Juszczyk (44) falls into the end zone for a touchdown the Kansas City Chiefs during the first half of the NFL Super Bowl 54 football game Sunday, Feb. 2, 2020, in Miami Gardens, Fla.

Associated Press

AT PRESS TIME:

It's halftime at Super Bowl 54, with San Francisco and Kansas City tied 10-10.

This is the first time the Super Bowl was tied at the half since 2015, when Seattle and New England went into the break knotted at 14. Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes is 12 for 18 passing for 104 yards. Garoppolo is 9 for 11 for 89 yards and the game's lone passing touchdown. □

Baffert earns 3,000th win with Thousand Words at Santa Anita

ARCADIA, Calif. (AP)—Hall of Fame trainer Bob Baffert got his 3,000th career victory when Thousand Words won the \$100,000 Robert B. Lewis Stakes on Saturday. Thousand Words won by three-quarters of a length in the Grade 3 race named for Baffert's late client. The colt ran 1 1/16 miles in 1:43.64 at Santa Anita to earn 10 points on the Kentucky Derby leaderboard that determines the 20-horse field for the race in May. Baffert also won the Lewis

Stakes for a record eighth time. "I had a feeling it was going to happen in this race," he said about his 3,000th victory. "The first 50 wins were probably the hardest, 100 were life-changers. I feel very blessed and fortunate that I've been able to last in this business and do so well after coming from the quarterhorse business." Dale Baird holds the career wins record by a trainer with 9,445. Thousand Words paid \$3.20, \$2.60 and \$2.10 as

the 3-5 favorite in the field of six 2-year-olds. He was purchased for \$1 million at the 2018 Keeneland September yearling sale and is unbeaten in three starts. "He ran very well," winning jockey Flavien Prat said. "He put me in a good spot and he was comfortable down there. He took the dirt (in his face) well and when I asked him to run, he really accelerated." Royal Act paid \$8.60 and \$4.40 at 18-1 odds in his first start on dirt. He earned four Kentucky Derby quali-



In a photo provided by Benoit Photo, Thousand Words and jockey Flavien Prat win the Grade III \$200,000 Robert B. Lewis Stakes horse race, giving trainer Bob Baffert his 3,000th win, Saturday, Feb. 1, 2020, at Santa Anita in Arcadia, Calif.

Associated Press

fying points. High Velocity, also trained by Baffert, returned \$2.40 to show. He received two Derby points. The victory, worth \$60,000, increased Thousand Words' career earnings to \$211,000. □

Pistons rally to beat Nuggets 128-123 in OT, snap skid

By **NOAH TRISTER**

AP Sports Writer

DETROIT (AP) — It took Detroit just over half a quarter to fall behind by 21. Then the Pistons rallied almost as quickly.

"We came out as flat as a pancake," coach Dwane Casey said. "But the second group came in and played."

Bruce Brown had 19 points, 10 rebounds and eight assists, and fellow reserve guard Reggie Jackson scored 20 points to lift the Pistons to a 128-123 overtime victory over the Denver Nuggets on Sunday. Andre Drummond added 21 points and 17 rebounds for Detroit, which snapped a five-game losing streak.

It was the 400th career double-double for the 26-year-old Drummond. Only Dwight Howard, who was 25, has reached that milestone at a younger age. Nikola Jokic had 39 points, 11 assists and 10 rebounds for Denver.

It was an impressive day for Detroit's younger players. Brown, who is in his second NBA season, played the most of anyone on the Pistons. Rookie Sekou Doumbouya scored all 17 of his points in the first half to help Detroit dig out of its early hole. Drummond put the Pistons ahead to stay with a dunk early in overtime, and

Brown added a 3-pointer that made it 116-112. Drummond fouled out with 2:43 left, but Detroit was able to hold on.

Jokic made a 3-pointer with 29.4 seconds left that made it 126-123, but Thon Maker answered with an alley-oop dunk from Tony Snell at the other end to push the lead to five with 16.5 seconds left.

"When that last lob went up to Thon, I did hold my breath," Casey said. "Time, score, situation — but he made it, so it worked out."

The Nuggets were playing for the third time in four days, and the 12:30 p.m. start time — 10:30 a.m. back in Denver — made for another potential challenge. The Nuggets looked just fine at the outset, making 16 of their first 20 shots from the field. They led 28-7 and 31-10, but that three-touchdown lead on Super Bowl Sunday didn't last.

"I was so impressed with the start of the game on both ends of the floor," Denver coach Michael Malone said. "We went to our bench and right when we went to our bench, it was like the bottom fell out."

Denver led 44-30 at the end of the first quarter. Detroit rallied in the second, tying the game with a 21-8 run and eventually taking a 68-65 lead into halftime.



Denver Nuggets forward Jerami Grant, left, reaches in as teammate center Nikola Jokic knocks the ball away from Detroit Pistons center Andre Drummond (0) during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Sunday, Feb. 2, 2020, in Detroit.

Associated Press

It was tight down the stretch. Jackson missed a runner in the final seconds of regulation with the score tied at 111.

Rookie forward Michael Porter Jr. joined the list of injured Denver players, missing the game because of a right ankle problem. The Nuggets are also without Paul Millsap (left knee), Jamal Murray (left ankle) and Mason Plumlee (right foot).

SNAPPED

Derrick Rose's streak of 14 straight games with at least 20 points ended when the

Detroit guard exited with a left groin issue. Rose finished with two points in 12:52.

"Next man up," Brown said. "Everybody has to be ready to play."

DEPTH

Detroit's reserves outscored Denver's 62-26. Malik Beasley (12 points) was the only backup for the Nuggets who scored in double figures.

"I just apologized to (starting forward) Jerami Grant," Malone said. "I played him 45 minutes tonight. That's insane. But guys have to be

ready to play and help us and defend, and you can't come in the game and allow three straight blow-bys for layups."

TIP-INS

Nuggets: Denver had its highest-scoring first quarter of the season, and the 44 points equaled the team's highest total in any quarter. ... It was the 10th triple-double of the season for Jokic and the 38th of his career.

Pistons: Luke Kennard (knee) missed the game. ... Snell surpassed 600 3-pointers for his career. □

Antetokounmpo lifts Bucks over Booker-led Suns 129-108

By **ANDREW WAGNER**

Associated Press

MILWAUKEE (AP) — The Milwaukee Bucks have lost 28 games since the start of last season. Only once did they follow one defeat with another.

Giannis Antetokounmpo had 30 points and 19 rebounds, and the Bucks rebounded yet again by beating the Phoenix Suns 129-108 Sunday — two days after a loss to Denver. "A good response," Bucks coach Mike Budenholzer said. "Not our best, but a steady, good response."

Antetokounmpo reached the 30-point mark for the 26th time, and fellow All-Star Khris Middleton had 25



Milwaukee Bucks' Giannis Antetokounmpo (34) shoots against the Phoenix Suns during the first half of an NBA basketball game Sunday, Feb. 2, 2020, in Milwaukee.

Associated Press

points, eight rebounds and six assists. Brook Lopez added 17 points, and the Bucks shot 49.5% and made 15 of 38 from 3-point range. Devin Booker scored 32 points and spurred a third-

quarter surge by Phoenix, and the deficit dropped to nine when DeAndre Ayton dropped a hook shot with 3:51 left in the quarter. Milwaukee responded with three straight 3-pointers

— including back-to-back from Dante DiVincenzo — to snuff out the rally.

"It was a game until they hit those three 3s in a row," Phoenix coach Monty Williams said. "I'm proud of the way the guys competed." Ayton had 20 points and 14 rebounds, and the Suns shot 39% and made just 6 of 23 from deep.

TIP-INS

Suns: G Ricky Rubio (right ankle), G Ty Jerome (left calf) and PF Dario Saric (ankle) sat out, leaving coach Monty Williams with just 11 players. ... SF Elie Okobo made his third start of the season in place of Rubio, and PF Tariq Owens, PG Jalen Lecque and

PG Jared Harper were recalled from Northern Arizona of the G-League. Frank Kaminsky and Aron Baynes also sat out. Baynes was active but remained on the sideline with a hip injury.

Bucks: PG Dante DiVincenzo scored 15 points after missing Milwaukee's game Friday against Denver with a sprained left ankle. ... The Bucks are still without George Hill, who also missed Friday's game with a strained right hamstring. ... The Bucks' magic number to clinch a playoff spot is now 8. ... Milwaukee scored at least 100 points for a 73rd consecutive game. □

Djokovic comes back for 8th Australian Open title, 17th Slam



Serbia's Novak Djokovic carries the Norman Brookes Challenge Cup onto Margaret Court Arena to celebrate with fans after defeating Austria's Dominic Thiem in the men's singles final of the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, early Monday, Feb. 3, 2020.

Associated Press

By HOWARD FENDRICH
AP Tennis Writer

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)

— Novak Djokovic was looking weary and worn down. He felt dizzy and trailed Dominic Thiem in the Australian Open final — miscues mounting, deficit growing.

Djokovic did what he does, though. He refused to lose, waited for a chance to pounce and found his best tennis when absolutely necessary. Even threw in a wrinkle, serve-and-volleying twice when facing break point.

Regaining his stamina and strokes, and showing some gutsy creativity, Djokovic came back to edge Thiem 6-4, 4-6, 2-6, 6-3, 6-4 Sunday night for an eighth Australian Open title, second in a row, and 17th Grand Slam trophy overall.

"I was on the brink of losing the match. Dominic ... disrupted my rhythm in my game at one point. He was a better player," Djokovic said. "Probably one point — and one shot — separated

us tonight."

Nonetheless, Djokovic improved his record in semi-finals and finals at Melbourne Park to 16-0 and assured himself of returning to No. 1 in the rankings, replacing Rafael Nadal.

No other man in the history of tennis has won this hard-court tournament more than six times. Only Roger Federer, with 20, and Nadal, with 19, have won more men's Grand Slam singles trophies than Djokovic.

"Amazing achievement. Unreal what you're doing throughout all these years," said the fifth-seeded Thiem, who is 0-3 in major finals. "You and also two other guys, I think you brought men's tennis to a complete new level."

Both finalists spoke about the devastating wildfires that have killed dozens of people and millions of animals around Australia. Djokovic also mentioned the recent deaths of NBA star Kobe Bryant and one of his daughters in a helicopter crash.

Addressing Thiem, Djokovic said: "I am sure you will definitely get one of the Grand Slam trophies. More than one."

A little more than six months after saving a pair of championship points against Federer en route to winning a five-set Wimbledon final, Djokovic again showed that he can't ever be counted out, coming back from two-sets-to-one behind in a Grand Slam title match for the first time. It didn't come easily for the 32-year-old from Serbia. He lost six games in a row in one stretch to Thiem, who plays a similar baseline game and eliminated Nadal in the quarterfinals.

Djokovic visited by a doctor and trainer in the third set and, desperate to hydrate, guzzled bottles of water and energy drink. He lectured the chair umpire about time violations.

"My energy dropped significantly," Djokovic said at his news conference, sipping an anti-oxidant drink instead of the Champagne

offered by tournament director Craig Tiley.

This was not the dominant Djokovic who made a hard-to-believe total of nine unforced errors during his straight-set triumph over Nadal in the final a year ago. Djokovic eclipsed that total in the first set alone Sunday, finishing with 57.

It was a physical test offering plenty of entertaining exchanges, with 61 points lasting at least nine shots apiece.

"Very demanding," Thiem said.

"Of course," he said, "I just feel a lot of emptiness right now."

At two key moments, Djokovic abandoned his usual grind-points-out script and went on the attack, rushing to the net after a serve when facing a break point — first, at 2-1 in the fourth set, then again at 2-1 in the fifth.

Paid off both times.

"Not characteristic of me," Djokovic said. "Kind of all-or-nothing."

Making a charge as his less-

experienced foe faltered, Djokovic broke to lead 5-3 in the fourth set, helped by a sloppy volley into the net tape, a double-fault and a bad forehand by Thiem.

A break early in the fifth helped Djokovic clutch the silver Australian Open trophy he also won in 2008, 2011-13, 2015-16 and 2019. He adds that haul to his five titles from Wimbledon, three from the U.S. Open and one from the French Open.

Thiem, an Austrian who is 26, was the runner-up to Nadal at Roland Garros each of the past two years and was again trying to become the first man born in the 1990s to win a major singles title.

Instead, the Big Three have won 13 consecutive Slams and 56 of the last 67.

"It's unique in sports history that the three best players — by far — are playing in the same era," Thiem said. "That's what makes it very, very difficult for other players to break through."

The status quo appeared in peril in the third set, when Djokovic merely watched and shook his head as a lob by Thiem curled over him and in. Djokovic didn't chase it. Wasn't entirely clear right then what the problem was, but perhaps he knew he needed to save some strength.

Heat, so often a factor in Melbourne, was not an issue. The crisp, cool conditions were pretty much ideal at the start, with a light breeze and the temperature around 70 degrees (20 Celsius). That dropped as the natural light faded, first leaving a violet ceiling of sky before nightfall arrived, accompanied by alarmingly loud squawks from a flock of seagulls perched on steel railings atop the arena.

Not surprisingly, given his experience and expertise, Djokovic came out loose, limber and locked in. Of the initial half-dozen points lasting at least nine strokes, he won all six. Within 13 minutes, he was ahead 3-0, as a chorus of his nickname — "No-le! No-le! No-le!" — rang out. □



Columbus Blue Jackets' Pierre-Luc Dubois scores against Montreal Canadiens goaltender Carey Price as Canadiens' Ben Chiarot defends during second-period NHL hockey game action in Montreal, Sunday, Feb. 2, 2020.

Associated Press

Dubois, Blue Jackets beat Canadiens 4-3, sweep season series

MONTREAL (AP) — Pierre-Luc Dubois scored twice and added an assist to lift the Columbus Blue Jackets over the Montreal Canadiens 4-3 Sunday. Vladislav Gavrikov and Gustav Nyquist also scored as Columbus swept the season series. The Blue Jackets have picked up at least a point in eight straight games.

"We didn't play a full 60 minutes but we played well enough to get the win," Dubois said. "At this point of the year, when it's just a race to make the playoffs, it's a huge win for us."

Elvis Merzlikins made 27 saves and improved to 10-2-0 since replacing injured starter Joonas Korpinalo.

"Overall the team played well," Merzlikins said. "We blocked shots, which was awesome. Even if it's back-to-back after the break, we skated well and were fast." Tomas Tatar, Max Domi and Shea Weber scored for the Canadiens, who remain eight points out of a playoff spot with 28 games left. Carey Price started for the second straight day and stopped 23 of 26 shots. "You look around the league and teams come back from down two or three goals in a period," Weber said.

"The discussion in here was that it was definitely possible. If you don't believe, it's not going to happen. It

didn't happen tonight but there was belief in here between periods.

"We couldn't get it done in the third."

Both teams were playing the second game of a back-to-back series. Columbus lost 2-1 in overtime to the Buffalo Sabres on Saturday, and Price beat the Florida Panthers 4-0.

The Jackets have topped the Canadiens in four straight games, including all three meetings this season.

Building off their impressive shutout Saturday, the Canadiens were strong out of the gate and jumped ahead to a 7-1 advantage in shots on goal.

Gavrikov scored the opener for Columbus at 12:45, a wrist shot from the faceoff dot for the defenseman's fifth of the season.

The play started when Dubois stole the puck from Ryan Poehling along the half wall.

Dubois beat Price on a long breakaway from his own blue line at 3:31. Weber's aggressive pinch, and Tatar's failure to track back, led to Montreal's defensive breakdown.

Tatar made up for the mistake six minutes later when he got the Canadiens on the board. Tatar scored glove-side on Merzlikins, seconds after Nick Suzuki intercepted Dubois's pass in his own zone. □



Washington Capitals left wing Alex Ovechkin (8), of Russia, skates next to Pittsburgh Penguins center Sidney Crosby (87) during the third period of an NHL hockey game, Sunday, Feb. 2, 2020, in Washington.

Associated Press

Penguins beat Capitals in 50th game between Crosby, Ovechkin

By STEPHEN WHYNO AP Hockey Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sidney Crosby got the better of Alex Ovechkin in their 50th regular-season meeting and set the stage for more drama down the stretch. Crosby had an assist, Matt Murray made 29 saves and the Pittsburgh Penguins beat the Washington Capitals 4-3 Sunday in the bitter rivals' first matchup this season. Pittsburgh crept within four points of Metropolitan Division-leading Washington with one extra game to play, and they'll face off three more times over the next two months.

"This is the kind of games we're going to see from here on in with the intensity and emotion and play-off kind of mentality," said Crosby, who now has 12 points in seven games since returning from a long injury absence. "There's enough guys around that have played in these games for a long time, and for new guys it seems like they get a feel right away for the intensity and emotion of the game."

The Penguins are 2-0 out of their bye week and have won five of seven since Crosby came back. They've won 31 of the 50 Crosby versus Ovechkin games dating to their NHL

debut during the 2005-06 season. Keeping Ovechkin in check was a big reason for this victory. Ovechkin was held off the score sheet and remained at 37 goals this season and 695 for his career.

"He's going to get his chances," Crosby said. "He had some really good looks. He's consistent, and he finds ways every game, whether it's in the usual spot where he gets it or it's around the net. You've just got to try to limit them, and you need some saves, too, and we were able to get that." Murray was solid, rewarding coach Mike Sullivan for the start over All-Star Tristan Jarry. One of his biggest stops came on a breakaway by Jakub Vrana in the second period with the Penguins leading 2-1, and Dominik Simon scored minutes later to double the lead.

Murray also got a piece of a shot by Ovechkin late in the third period with the Penguins clinging to a lead and the Capitals pressing.

"It was Ovi who picked it up, and he made a nice move," Murray said. "He kind of held on to it instead of just shooting it. I just tried to get over there as fast as I could." Pittsburgh made life difficult on rookie Capitals goaltender Ilya Samsonov,

who allowed goals to Sam Lafferty, Patric Hornqvist, Simon and Brandon Tanev on 33 shots. In his first career start against the Penguins, Samsonov gave up one goal short side, one off his stick, one on a rebound and was victimized by a bad bounce late.

"I thought he was fine," coach Todd Reirden said. "A couple bounces don't go his way, so he'd probably like that back. But we'll learn something about him and how he can be a little bit more solid in his next opportunity of a game of this magnitude."

Tempers flared several times between the Penguins and Capitals, who met in the playoffs three of the past four years. They racked up 13 penalties and, despite all the star power, combined to go 0 for 9 on the power play. Lars Eller was the best player on the ice and scored twice for Washington, and Evgeny Kuznetsov added a third-period goal.

"He's a horse for us every night," Capitals winger Tom Wilson said of Eller. "He works extremely hard. He takes care of himself. He's a great pro. On a night like tonight he's just one of those players that when he's going he can't be denied." □

Simpson rallies to beat Finau in Phoenix Open playoff

By JOHN NICHOLSON

AP Sports Writer

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (AP) —

Webb Simpson was in big trouble when he drove into the right-side water on the par-5 15th.

"I didn't think it was over," Simpson said. "But I thought, 'I'm going to really have to do something special to get back in it.'"

He did — at friend Tony Finau's expense Sunday in the Waste Management Phoenix Open on a TPC Scottsdale course that played tougher with firm greens and a touch of wind.

Simpson birdied the final two holes of regulation to force a playoff with Finau, then won with a 10-foot birdie putt on the first extra hole.

Two strokes ahead with two holes left, Finau missed an 18-foot birdie try in the playoff on the par-4 18th after driving left into the church pew bunkers.

Simpson two-putted for birdie from the fringe on the short par-4 17th and made a 17-footer for birdie from the edge of the green on the 18th. Finau, after hitting a 366-yard drive and an approach to 8 feet, missed a chance to win when his birdie try slid right.

Simpson closed with a 2-under 69 to match Finau at 17-under 267.

"Today was a lot different. Today played tougher,"



Webb Simpson holds the champion's trophy and wears the winner's jacket as he stands with the Thunderbirds Charities members after the final round of the Waste Management Phoenix Open PGA Tour golf event Sunday, Feb. 2, 2020, in Scottsdale, Ariz.

Associated Press

Simpson said. "I thought the pins were very tough, by far the toughest day of pins, course was longer, we had wind. We hadn't had wind all week, so everything today was harder."

Finau shot 70.

"I hit good putts," Finau said. "The first one I hit really good, I thought I made it. ... Second one, similar line, a little bit farther, decided to play a little bit more break and it didn't break."

Simpson won his sixth PGA Tour title and first since the 2018 Players Championship. The 2012 U.S. Open champion improved to 2-6

in playoffs, three years after falling to Hideki Matsuyama in extra holes at TPC Scottsdale. Simpson also lost a playoff in November in the RSM Classic.

"I think getting frustrated after RSM led to being better prepared for today," Simpson said.

Simpson visited instructor Butch Harmon on Monday in Las Vegas.

"I started the week off right, just getting a checkup from him," Simpson said. "And two weeks of rest, I came in feeling ready to go."

Finau missed a chance for his second PGA Tour vic-

tory. He also lost a playoff to Xander Schauffele in November 2018 in China in the WGC-HSBC Champions.

"I definitely didn't give him the tournament," Finau said. "Unfortunately, it's how the cookie crumbles. ... I love Webb. I think the camaraderie that I have with him as being one of my best friends out here, it would have been hard for either one of us to take this victory from each other. He got the upper hand this time, but I love that guy." Simpson felt for Finau.

"It's hard. He is a great friend," Simpson said. "Our

wives are friends and he's one of the best guys on tour. So it is a bit tough."

A stroke ahead of Simpson after a third-round 62, Finau parred the first seven holes, limiting his birdie chances with sluggish iron and wedge play. He bogeyed the par-4 eighth to end a 57-hole bogey-free streak, leaving an 8-iron from the fairway 65 feet short.

Finau made a big par save on the par-4 10th, holing a 25-footer to only lose one stroke after Simpson ran in a 5-footer for birdie and the lead.

Finau pulled even with an 18-foot birdie putt on the par-3 12th, a day after Simpson aced the hole in a 64. Finau made a 9-foot birdie putt on the par-5 13th to take the lead and doubled the advantage with a par on the 15th after Simpson drove into the water.

They each parred the par-3 stadium 16th, with Finau wearing a Kobe Bryant jersey on the rowdy hole. The PGA Tour cut the pin position in a tribute to Bryant, using his two Lakers uniform numbers. The pin was placed 24 yards from the front edge and 8 yards from the left edge, putting it in the back left corner. The flag had an 8 one side and a 24 on the other, and the numbers also were painted into the grass in front of the green. □



Graeme McDowell from Northern Ireland kiss the trophy after he wins the final round of the Saudi International at Royal Greens Golf and Country Club, Sunday, Feb. 2, 2020, in Red Sea resort of King Abdullah Economic City, Saudi Arabia.

Associated Press

KING ABDULLAH ECONOMIC CITY, Saudi Arabia (AP)

— Graeme McDowell shot a steady even-par 70 to

Graeme McDowell holds off Dustin Johnson to win Saudi event

win the Saudi International by two strokes on Sunday for his first European Tour title since 2014.

McDowell, the 2010 U.S. Open winner at windy Pebble Beach, protected his lead on a breezy afternoon by the Red Sea to card a 12-under 268 total, holding off late pressure by defending champion Dustin Johnson. Johnson made an eagle on the par-5 18th by chipping in over a bunker for a 3-under 67 as McDowell saved par on No. 17.

McDowell sank his 5-footer to par the 18th and secure

his 16th professional win, in a 13th different country.

A first title on McDowell's home tour since the 2014 French Open lifted him back into a top-50 world ranking, and earned a winner's check of \$583,000.

"It's special," the 40-year-old Northern Irishman said. "I want to be back up there one more time just to be able to play against these guys."

Phil Mickelson fired a 67 to end in a three-way tie for third place on 9 under, with Thomas Pieters (65) and Gavin Green (70).

McDowell's partner in the final pairing, Victor Dubuisson, fell away after dropping five shots from Nos. 10-14 in a 4-over 74. The Frenchman was among five players tied for sixth place on 7 under, including Sergio Garcia (66).

McDowell began the day with a one-shot advantage and never fell out of at least a share of the lead at the Royal Greens Golf and Country Club.

Johnson made an eagle-3 on No. 4, yet carded only one more birdie until his flourish on the final hole. □



France's Alexis Pinturault, center, winner of an alpine ski, men's World Cup giant slalom, celebrates on the podium with second-placed Switzerland's Loic Meillard, left, and third-placed Norway's Leif Kristian Nestvold Haugen, in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany, Sunday, Feb. 2, 2020.

Associated Press

Pinturault rallies from 4th to win GS, Kristoffersen 7th

GARMISCH-PARTENKIRCH-EN, Germany (AP) — Alexis Pinturault became the first skier this season to win two men's World Cup giant slaloms, triumphing on the Kandahar 2 course Sunday to end a series of disappointing results in his strongest discipline.

The Frenchman won the season-opener in October but placed 17th, eighth and 10th respectively in the next three GS events. On Sunday, he was 0.18 seconds off the lead in fourth before posting the third-fastest time in the second run and beat first-run leader Loic Meillard by 0.16. The Swiss skier matched his career best result by finishing second.

The win came five days after Pinturault came runner-up in a night slalom in Schladming.

"The last two races were good," Pinturault said. "Since December, I didn't ski well."

It was a long January for me. But we worked a lot and today it was finally very good."

It was Pinturault's 27th career win and 13th in giant slalom. He also won four bronze medals in the discipline at major events - two at the Olympics, two at world championships.

The three giant slaloms between Pinturault's triumphs had three different winners, with American Tommy Ford in Beaver Creek, Norway's Henrik Kristoffersen in Alta

Badia, and Slovenia's Zan Kranjec in Adelboden.

On Sunday, Kristoffersen dropped from second behind Meillard after the opening run to seventh, and Kranjec finished fifth to hold on to his lead in the discipline standings, closely followed by Kristoffersen and Pinturault.

The Norwegian remained in the lead of the overall standings with 877 points, while second-place Pinturault closed the gap to 55 points.

Aleksander Aamodt Kilde was two more points behind in third, after the Norwegian finished Sunday's race in sixth.

"For me it was a very good day," Pinturault said. "I saw Kilde was also good, Henrik was maybe a bit less today but it is a strong competition."

Leif Kristian Nestvold-Haugen of Norway was 0.24 behind in third for his fourth career podium result, while Filip Zubcic placed fourth after the Croatian timed the fastest second run.

Manuel Feller finished 28th and was the only Austrian to score points as the Austrian ski team had their worst result in a men's GS in the 53-year history of the World Cup.

"It's hard to find an explanation right after the race but I think the guys are putting themselves under too much pressure," head coach Andreas Puelacher said. □



Italy's Federica Brignone celebrates winning an alpine ski, women's World Cup super G, in Rosa Khutor, Russia, Sunday, Feb. 2, 2020.

Associated Press

Brignone wins super-G in overall leader Shiffrin's absence

ROSA KHUTOR, Russia (AP)

— Federica Brignone won a women's World Cup super-G after overall leader Mikaela Shiffrin sat out the race on Sunday, strengthening her runner-up position in the standings. The win left the Italian 270 points short of Shiffrin's leading tally.

The American three-time overall champion decided to skip the races in the 2014 Olympic resort after winning the previous super-G and a downhill in Bulgaria a week ago.

With cloudy weather affecting visibility, Brignone overcame a mistake halfway down the course when she caught a bump and lost half a second.

She quickly rediscovered the ideal race line and won by 0.20 seconds ahead of her Italian teammate Sofia Goggia, who returned after missing the last two races with a right leg injury following a downhill crash.

"I had a big fault on the flats but I knew I could do well on the steep," said Brignone, adding she didn't believe that the win boosted her chances in the overall standings.

"(Shiffrin) is so strong and wins so many points in the slalom, she is unreachable for the big globe," Brignone said. "But I am very proud of myself this season. In super-

G, in GS, in downhill, it's perfect for me."

It was the fourth 1-2 finish for the Italian women's team this Word Cup season.

"It was really a tough week after Bansko for me," said runner-up Goggia, who wore a cast to protect her tibia.

"I am happy with my result but I think I didn't ski that well," she added.

Joana Haehlen of Switzerland finished 0.34 behind in third for her second career podium, a week after she also finished third in a downhill.

Her fourth-place Swiss teammate Corinne Suter was the only other skier to finish within a half-second of the winner.

Shiffrin, who won the super-G world title and discipline standings last year, was not the only top contender to sit out this weekend's races, with Slovakia's Petra Vlhova and Italy's Marta Bassino also refraining from traveling to Russia.

Brignone became the fourth different winner of a women's super-G this season, after Germany's Viktoria Rebensburg, Goggia and Shiffrin won the previous events. Rebensburg placed eighth on Sunday. The victory sent Brignone top of the discipline standings, 16 points clear of Suter and 20 ahead of Shiffrin.

Shiffrin's teammate Breezy Johnson crashed halfway through her run but the American got up and appeared unhurt. Johnson returned to the World Cup in January after a 16-month injury layoff.

The super-G was the first World Cup race here since the Sochi Olympics.

A downhill on Saturday was canceled after days of heavy snowfall affected the slope. The unfavorable weather had already wiped out all three training days this week.

Last season, when Shiffrin was also skipping the event, bad weather caused the cancellation of both races. "Today it is very important for Sochi, for Russia," Brignone said. "We have come here for two years but they have no luck with the weather. It's good to have a race today."

The women's World Cup continues with another downhill and super-G in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany, next weekend. □



Online political ads: cheap, efficient and ripe for misuse

By **BARBARA ORTUTAY and AMANDA SEITZ**
Associated Press

Older men in Arkansas might see a close-up photo of President Donald Trump pumping his fist in the air, along with a message asking them to donate \$30 to his campaign for a Super Bowl commercial.

Middle-aged women in California might see a photo of Trump pointing to a crowd, with a plea for them to give "any amount" to the campaign.

Before Election Day, politicians across party lines are expected to spend more than \$1 billion to pelt voters with millions of these cheap online ads, which can be tailored to a voter's most personal details — down to one household or even a single individual.

Experts warn that this ad-targeting system is still vulnerable to manipulation by foreign governments and domestic actors trying to influence the election, just as they did in 2016. Those attempts could become more sophisticated this year as tech companies wrestle with a dysfunctional federal election watchdog agency and deploy haphazard safeguards that still offer plenty of loopholes.

"There's now so much money and attention spent online with so few rules that if you wanted chaos, that's the place to go for chaos," said David Karpf, a political communications professor at The George Washington University. "And there's a bunch of people who want chaos."

According to Facebook, Russia-connected accounts spent about \$100,000 on Facebook ads during the 2016 presidential election. The ads seemed to fan division on polarizing issues such as gun control and race relations. That's a fraction of the cost of a single 30-second spot on a major TV network.

But it was enough to stir up trouble. In response, Google, Facebook and Twitter instituted verification policies that require advertisers to confirm their identity using their orga-



In this April 26, 2019, file photo, visitors to New York's Times Square use umbrellas to shield themselves against the rain as they walk past the Armed Forces Recruitment Center.

Associated Press

nization's tax identification number or other government ID. Twitter later banned all political ads.

"Microtargeting" allowed the divisive messages to reach small pockets of voters in certain geographical locations based on their specific interests.

Google this month began limiting U.S. advertisers' ability to target political ads beyond broad categories such as sex, age and postal code. Facebook will continue to allow campaigns to target voters for any reason, down to their most personal interests.

Such targeting technology offers distinct advantages. A candidate running a TV spot might reach a specific audience watching the show "The Real Housewives of Atlanta." But on Facebook that same candidate can run a specific ad aimed at Atlanta housewives who lean moderate, like to hunt and hold a master's degree, for instance.

In Texas, for example, Republican strategist Chris Wilson said his polling found suburban women were frustrated by red-light cameras, so he targeted thousands of them on Facebook with ads promising that his client GOP Gov. Greg Abbott would abolish the cameras if elected to a second term in 2018.

Abbott won and signed a

law last summer banning red-light cameras in the state. Wilson argues that microtargeting helps to mobilize voters around certain issues.

Google and Facebook have spent years collecting troves of data that now help campaigns persuade voters, said Luca Cian, a professor at the Darden School of Business who focuses on how marketing affects political campaigns.

"I can specify that one person in one specific household should see a specific ad," he said. "And their neighbor could see a different ad."

It's not just campaigns running ads. With the click of a button and a few hundred dollars, ordinary people or businesses can now purchase political ads that are directed at specific groups of people to see.

The sheer volume of ads makes it nearly impossible to track them.

"How does anybody even begin to try and keep up and monitor tens of thousands ... or maybe millions of ads?" asked Ellen Weintraub, chairwoman of the Federal Election Commission, the taxpayer-funded watchdog agency that creates and enforces rules for federal campaigns.

That's a problem for journalists seeking to hold politicians accountable and for

opposing candidates who might unwittingly be featured in an attack ad by political rivals.

In nearly every type of race — from city council candidates to the presidential election — campaigns might struggle to spot false claims running about their candidate online, said Democratic campaign consultant Jared Kamrass.

"If a negative ad is run against my candidate on digital, I almost have no way of knowing about it unless someone screenshots it," Kamrass said.

But there is a flip side. The ads are helpful for lesser-known candidates or smaller local and statewide campaigns that can now spend as little as \$250 to reach hundreds or thousands of voters online, he said.

Since the last presidential election, tech companies have considered many questions: Should they allow political ads at all? Fact-check them? Catalog them in a public database? Prevent them from being targeted to small groups of people?

Some companies adopted their own rules for political ads. Twitter, which made little money off the ads, took the most radical step. In November, CEO Jack Dorsey announced the site would reject all political

ads from its platform worldwide.

The tech companies have been left to regulate themselves, in part, because the FEC has been gridlocked for years over rules that would be tailored to the booming online political ad industry. The agency is without a full set of leaders and does not have a quorum needed to consider new rules for ads or to penalize campaigns for violating the law.

"We end up in kind of the messy state we're in when your regulators stop regulating and there's a ton of money in the system," Karpf added. "Of course that's going to end up going haywire."

Facebook has stuck to its plan of prohibiting third-party fact checkers from rating political ads as false, despite widespread criticism from politicians such as Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Elizabeth Warren.

The social network has acknowledged that the tools aren't perfect. Sarah Schiff, a Facebook product manager, said the goal is to make it "more difficult" for bad actors to misuse the platform.

Even smaller platforms, including TikTok and Pinterest, have been forced to confront the issue by banning political ads entirely, as has the Microsoft-owned LinkedIn. But none of those rules is foolproof.

Experts say political campaigns, foreign government and trolls will continue to push the boundaries, testing to see which messages, images or videos resonate with potential voters based on their data.

"For democracy to work, you need a common reality, which means a common understanding of who's saying what when," said Daniel G. Newman, the president of MapLight, a nonprofit that tracks political money, lobbying and votes. "But when politicians are saying different things to different audiences, even thousands of different small audiences, there's an inability to hold them accountable." □

Task force says 'mission-driven' investors must help cabbies

By KAREN MATTHEWS

Associated Press

A task force studying New York City's struggling taxi industry called Friday for "mission-driven" investors to help bail out drivers who incurred massive debt once the value of the medallion that allows a person to operate a yellow cab plummeted in the age of Uber and Lyft.

The report also recommends upgrading taxi technology to make it easier to summon a yellow cab by smartphone so that traditional taxis can compete with app-based services.

The 76-page report details how the value of a taxi medallion topped \$1 million in 2013 but sank to less than \$200,000, leaving many medallion owners hundreds of thousands of dollars in debt and facing foreclosure or bankruptcy. "Uber, Lyft and other app-based companies were able to come into the market entirely unregulated," City Councilman Stephen Levin, co-chairman of the task force that produced the report, said at a City Hall news conference.

"We saw over 100,000 licenses in the streets within just a few years. What did that do to the million-dollar medallions that the city sold?

When the collateral for a million-dollar loan is suddenly worth \$200,000," Levin said, "The lender seeks more collateral. You put up your home, you put up all of your assets, you put up your family's assets, just to be able to hold on to the investment you saved for your entire adult life."

City officials adopted a moratorium on new licenses for for-hire vehicles in 2018 and extended it last year, but they have not yet taken action to provide relief to the medallion owners who are buried in debt.

The task force is recommending that the city recruit "mission-driven" investors who would buy the loans, forgive the bulk of the money and restructure the payments.

Bhairavi Desai, the founder of the New York Taxi Work-



Taxis are lined up in traffic, Wednesday, Jan. 29, 2020, in New York.

ers Alliance and a member of the task force that produced the report, said there are about 3,000 drivers who need debt relief because they owe more on their loans than the medallions are worth. She said the average debt is about \$600,000, and she suggested that all but \$150,000 of that should be forgiven. "We invested in this city," Desai said.

"We're asking you to invest in our families."

Levin said debt collectors are already buying up medallion loans at discounted prices but are not providing any relief to the owner-drivers.

Task force members said the size of any debt-relief fund is not known.

Drivers attending the news conference said the rescue plan would be the answer to their prayers.

"If it goes through we're going to have our life back," said taxi driver Mouhamadou Aliyu, 47, who said he owes \$635,000 on a medallion that's worth a fraction of that.

"Every day I work 7 to 7 and every day I got home empty handed," said Aliyu, an immigrant from Ivory Coast who bought his medallion for \$331,472 at a city auction in 2004.

"I keep borrowing from friends because I'm not going to let go of my medal-

lion." He added, "The only way for me to survive would be if we get a bailout."

Driver Augustine Tang, who owes \$498,000 on the medallion he took over from his late father, said, "I'm hopeful that this will work. Because if it doesn't there are going to be a lot of lives at stake."

While Uber has taken much of the blame for the taxi industry's woes because of its rapid growth and its combative stance toward government regulation, critics have also pointed to the financial institutions that steered immigrant drivers toward risky loans and to New York City officials who promoted medallions as a safe investment.

The report quotes a pamphlet promoting a city auction of taxi medallions in 2014, two years after the first Uber car hit the city's streets, that showed a graph of medallion sale prices under the heading, "It's Better than the Stock Market." The city made \$855 million on medallion sales between 2002 and 2014.

Olivia Lapeyrolerie, a spokeswoman for Democratic Mayor Bill de Blasio, who took office in January 2014, said some of the task force's ideas "could make a real difference and we're already diving in to determine which ones we can

make viable as soon as possible."

Asked about the medallions that were auctioned during the first months of de Blasio's administration, Lapeyrolerie said, "Our administration came in just in time for the crash. One of our first actions was halting medallion sales, and we were one of the first and most ardent voices for curbing the rapid growth of corporations like Uber." Matthew Daus, the head of the city's Taxi and Limousine Commission from 2001 to 2010 under de Blasio's predecessor, Michael Bloomberg, who is currently seeking the Democratic presidential nomination,

said the crisis of sinking medallion values "is primarily the result of Uber's exponential growth after its 2012 market entry."

Daus said the priority for any bailout should be owner-drivers who bought medallions at the three auctions held in 2013 and 2014. "The city benefited from those auction sales by more than \$409 million, and should return or find the money somehow," he said.

An Uber spokeswoman said the company has no comment on the report. □

Associated Press

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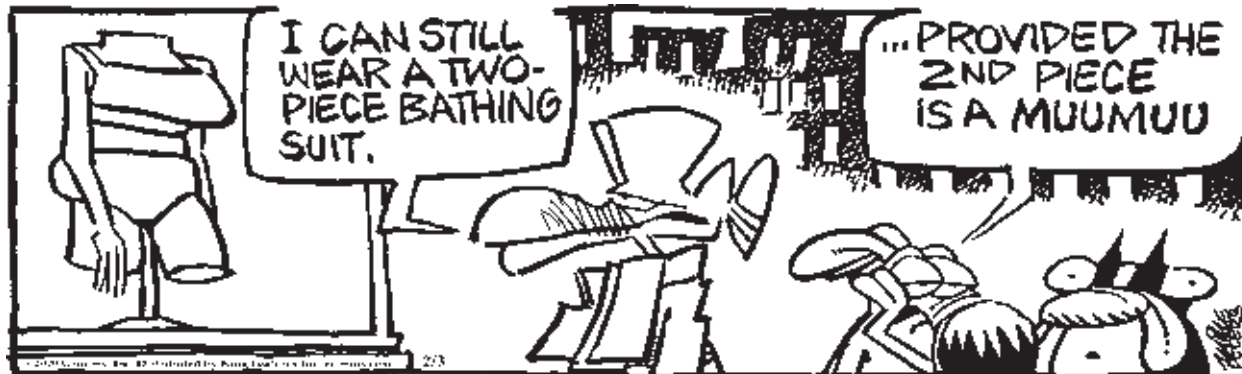
6 Chix



Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

		3		1			2	
9		4	6			5		
	2			3	5		6	9
6		5		4			4	
	1	2				3		8
					7			
3	5		7	9			8	
		1			3	9		6
	9			6		2		

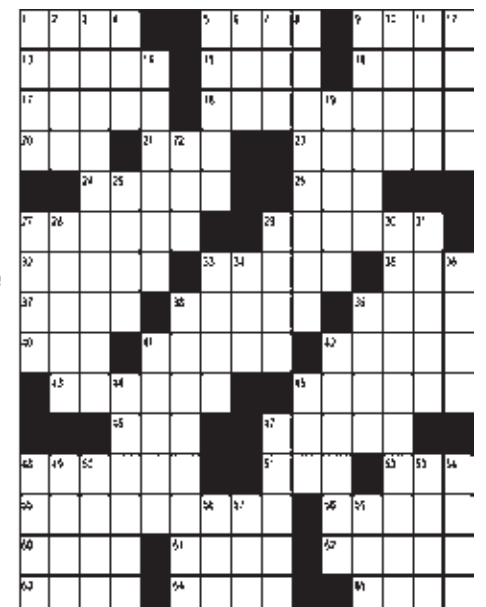
Difficulty Level ★

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Saturday's puzzle answer

3	9	4	2	7	5	6	1	8
5	2	6	8	4	1	9	7	3
1	7	8	3	9	6	4	5	2
2	3	7	5	8	9	1	4	6
9	4	5	1	6	3	2	8	7
6	8	1	7	2	4	3	9	5
8	6	9	4	5	2	7	3	1
7	1	2	9	3	8	5	6	4
4	5	3	6	1	7	8	2	9

- ACROSS**
- Asian desert
 - Tow along
 - Performances
 - Frank replicas
 - Risque
 - Lawn mower brand
 - Former U.S. Senator Lott
 - Surgery
 - As flat pancake
 - up: careless
 - Wake alone
 - Vicente moon
 - Fru to take container
 - Plot crafty
 - Asclerous
 - Voracious Argentina
 - Arthritis symptoms
 - Crime of "Top Gun"
 - Like yummy cinnamon rolls
 - Leaving
 - Place to buy salami & eye
 - Faux social blunder
 - Soup impetuous
 - Portions
 - Acting awards
 - Vae teine
 - Connecting word
 - Cardinal language
 - Sedon seen
 - Iowa's state tree
 - High nav. rank
 - Cabinetmaker
 - Concur
 - Indiana-to-Ohio direction
 - Plato's S.
 - Examination
 - Furry
 - Home's home



Created by Jacqueline E. Matthews

2/3/20

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

DEF	ALISLE	ALMS
ORRS	DRAIN	LAIT
TRAP	DOING	TINA
SURRENDER	EDGY	
OURS	APR	
SCRUBS	ADVISERS	
MEETS	CREEP	AAA
ELLS	POSED	TGIF
ALE	ARMOR	PULSE
ROTATION	CAREER	
GEM	CONK	
NOTE	ADORATION	
EARN	TEXAS	SMUG
WHAT	ELECT	HIDE
TUMS	SINKS	TEE

- DOWN**
- move on
 - cry to a stoppoke
 - is not to reason why
 - Panning
 - Charged atom
 - Male bee
 - Ice Cube's music
 - Part of a royal flush
 - Whirling about
 - Be present at
 - Penny or quarter
 - on, tramped
 - Family members
 - Tempests
 - Wrong: haywire
 - Very sma
 - one's tongue
 - said nothing
 - Copper or tanker
 - beans
 - chocolate pods
 - Zinfandel or Chenn Blanc
 - Engage in price gouging
 - Island nation
 - near Sicily
 - Whale groups
 - Feel poorly
 - Shopper's paper
 - Pancake
 - Water barriers
 - Cyclist
 - Armstrong
 - Lively dances
 - Rug
 - Ear Grey product
 - Value
 - Take a hike
 - Working sock
 - Circle corners
 - Truman & Obama actor
 - Veal or venison
 - Fraternity letter
 - Suffix for baron or ion
 - Martin ingredient

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Date : 03/20 to 03/27/2020
Date : 02/21 to 02/27/2020
Date : 01/17 to 02/22/2021

Marriott Surf Club
2 BR Ocean Side Platinum
Date : 03/6 to 03/13/2020
\$4 K
Divi Links Golf \$1,5 K
Carnival week sleep 4
Date :02/15 to 02/22/ 2020

Marriott Ocean Club
Platinum
1 BR Ocean View \$10 K
1 BR Ocean Front \$20 K
2 BR Ocean View \$17 K
2 BR Ocean View \$26 K

Marriott Surf Club
Platinum
2 BR Ocean View \$ 17 K
2 BR Ocean Side \$ 18 K
2 BR Ocean Front \$26 K
3 BR Ocean View \$26 K

Aruba Divi Phoenix
1 BR WK 8
Building 6 on the 4th floor
27 weeks remain \$15 K
1 BR WK 11
building 7 on the 3rd floor
33 weeks remain \$15 K

Aruba Divi Phoenix
1 BR Week # 8/9
Penthouse 14th floor
with 32/22 weeks remain
\$20 K both weeks
Divi Links Golf
1 BR WK # 4 \$8 K
Birdie 1
19 weeks remain
Studio WK # 5
Birdie 5 \$7,5 K
28 weeks remain

Divi Links Golf
1 BR WK 6 \$8 K
Birdie 1
19 weeks remain
Studio wk 7/8
Birdie 5 \$7,5 K each
27/29 weeks remain

Divi Links Golf
1 BR WK 8/9
Eagle 9 \$9,5K each
with 27/19 weeks remain

Divi Links Golf
1 BR WK #11
Birdie 3 \$9 K
26 weeks remain
1 BR wk 12/13
ground Floor
With 33/34 weeks remain
Birdie 10 \$9,5 K each

Divi Village
Studio wk 6 \$ 7,5 K
Building F
21 weeks remain
2 sd Floor 18 weeks remain
Dutch Village
1 BR WK 7/8 \$9 K each
15 weeks remain each
2 BR WK 7 \$18 K
25 weeks remain

Dutch Village
1 BR WK 9
16 weeks remain
1 BR WK 8 \$8 K
12 weeks remain
1 BR WK 7/8 \$7 K
12/24 weeks remain

Eagle Resorts
1 BR WK 5,6,7,8
Ground Floor \$6,5 K each
1 BR wk 7/8/9 \$6,5 K each
Caribbean Palm Village
1 BR wk 3/4 \$6 K
2 BR WK 5/6 \$ 7 K each
Le Vent Condo
3 BR , 2 Bath \$650 K

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1 BR WK # 10/11
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\$6,5 K each
1 BR WK 7 \$ 9 K
rd floor garden view

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Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

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Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

TRAVEL INFO

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American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

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Oosterdam

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Alcoholics Anonymous
Tel. 736 2952

Narcotics Anonymous
Tel. 583 8989

Women in Difficulties
Tel. 583 5400

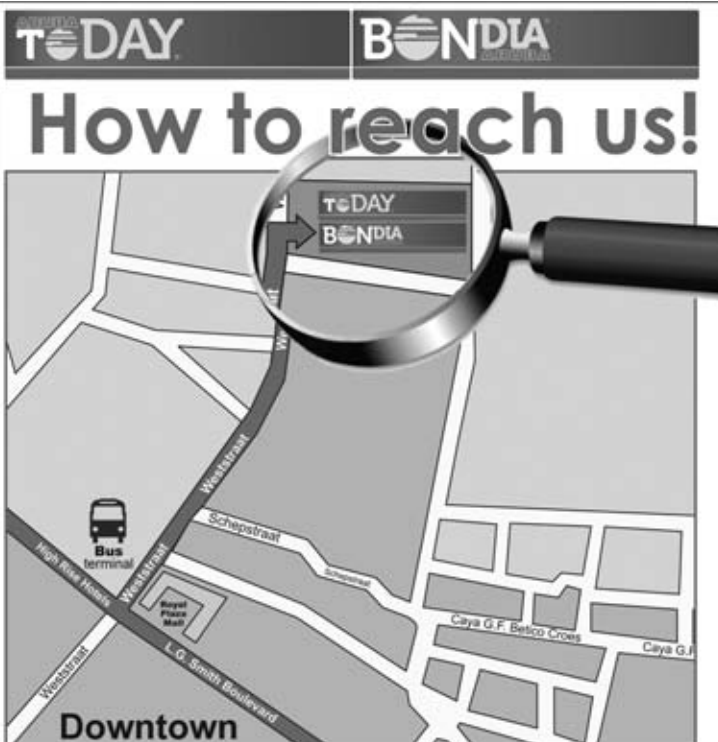
Centre for Diabetes
Tel. 524 8888

Child Abuse Prevention
Tel. 582 4433

Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

General Info

Phone Directory Tel. 118



As forests burn around the world, drinking water is at risk

By **TAMMY WEBBER**

Associated Press

Fabric curtains stretch across the huge Warragamba Dam to trap ash and sediment expected to wash off wildfire-scorched slopes and into the reservoir that holds 80% of untreated drinking water for the Greater Sydney area. In Australia's national capital of Canberra, where a state of emergency was declared on Friday because of an out-of-control forest fire to its south, authorities are hoping a new water treatment plant and other measures will prevent a repeat of water quality problems and disruption that followed deadly wildfires 17 years ago.

There have not yet been major impacts on drinking water systems in southeast Australia from the intense fires that have burned more than 40,000 square miles (104,000 square kilometers) since September. But authorities know from experience that the biggest risks will come with repeated rains over many months or years while the damaged watersheds, or catchment areas, recover.

And because of the size and intensity of the fires, the potential impacts are not clear yet.

"The forest area burned in Australia within a single fire season is just staggering," said Stefan Doerr, a professor at Swansea University in England who studies the effects of forest fires on sediment and ash runoff. "We haven't seen anything like it in recorded history."

The situation in Australia illustrates a growing global concern: Forests, grasslands and other areas that supply drinking water to hundreds of millions of people are increasingly vulner-

able to fire due in large part to hotter, drier weather that has extended fire seasons, and more people

creased in recent decades, and that expansion likely will continue through the century because of a

and other aquatic life necessary for high-quality water before it reaches reservoirs. Already, thun-

than doubled over the past 20 to 30 years, said Doerr, from Swansea University.

Although there might be fewer cities and towns in the path of runoff in those areas, problems do occur. In Canada's Fort McMurray, Alberta, the cost of treating ash-tainted water in its drinking-water system increased dramatically after a 2016 wildfire.

In the Western U.S., 65% of all surface water supplies originate in forested watersheds where the risk of wildfires is growing — including in the historically wet Pacific Northwest. By mid-century almost 90% of them will experience an increase — doubling in some — in post-fire sedimentation that could affect drinking water supplies, according to a federally funded 2017 study.

"The results are striking and alarming," said Sankey, the USGS geologist, who helped lead the study. "But a lot of communities are working to address these issues," he added. "It's not all doom and gloom because there are a lot of opportunities to reduce risks."

Denver Water, which serves 1.4 million customers, discovered "the high cost of being reactive" after ash and sediment runoff from two large, high-intensity fires, in 1996 and 2002, clogged a reservoir that handles 80% of the water for its 1.4 million customers, said Christina Burri, a watershed scientist for the utility. It spent about \$28 million to recover, mostly to dredge 1 million cubic yards (765,555 cubic meters) of sediment from the reservoir.

Since then, the utility has spent tens of millions more to protect the forests, partnering with the U.S. Forest Service and others to protect the watershed and proactively battle future fires, including by clearing some trees and controlling vegetation in populated areas. Utilities also can treat slopes with wood chips and other cover and install barriers to slow ash runoff. They purposely burn vegetation when fire danger is low to get rid of undergrowth. □



A boom floats across a small bay near the dam wall at Warragamba Dam in Warragamba, Australia, on Wednesday, Jan. 29, 2020.

Associated Press

moving into those areas, where they can accidentally set fires.

More than 60% of the water supply for the world's 100 largest cities originates in fire-prone watersheds — and countless smaller communities also rely on surface water in vulnerable areas, researchers say.

When rain does fall, it can be intense, dumping a lot of water in a short period of time, which can quickly erode denuded slopes and wash huge volumes of ash, sediment and debris into crucial waterways and reservoirs. Besides reducing the amount of water available, the runoff also can introduce pollutants, as well as nutrients that create algae blooms.

What's more, the area that burns each year in many forest ecosystems has in-

warmer climate, experts say.

Most of the more than 25,000 square miles (64,000 square kilometers) that have burned in Victoria and New South Wales have been forest, including rainforests, according to scientists in New South Wales and the Victorian government. Some believe that high temperatures, drought and more frequent fires may make it impossible for some areas to be fully restored.

Very hot fires burn organic matter and topsoil needed for trees and other vegetation to regenerate, leaving nothing to absorb water. The heat also can seal and harden the ground, causing water to run off quickly, carrying everything in its path.

That in turn can clog streams, killing fish, plants

derstorms in southeast Australia in recent weeks have caused debris flows and fish kills in some rivers, though fires continue to burn.

"You potentially get this feedback cycle," where vegetation can't recolonize an area, which intensifies erosion of any remaining soil, said Joel Sankey, research geologist for the U.S. Geological Survey.

The role of climate change is often difficult to pin down in specific wildfires, said Gary Sheridan, a researcher at the University of Melbourne. But he said the drying effects of wildfire — combined with hotter weather and less rainfall in much of Australia, even as more rain falls in the northern part of the country — mean that "we should expect more fires."

But climate change has affected areas such as northern Canada and Alaska, where average annual temperatures have risen by almost 4 degrees (2.2 degrees Celsius) since the 1960s, compared to about 1 degree (0.55 degrees Celsius) farther south. As a result, the forested area burned annually has more

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In this Oct. 26, 2005 file photo, author Anne Rice talks about her new book during an interview at her home in La Jolla, Calif.

Associated Press

Tulane acquires archive of "Vampire" author Anne Rice

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Tulane University has acquired the complete archives of bestselling author Anne Rice, who was born and raised in New Orleans and whose books, including "Interview with a Vampire," often drew inspiration from her hometown. The collection was a gift from Stuart Rose and the Stuart Rose Family Foundation to the university's Howard-Tilton Memorial Library, the university said in a statement.

"That Tulane has provided a home for my papers is exciting and comforting," Rice said in the statement. "All my novels — in a career spanning more than 40 years — have been profoundly influenced by the history and beauty of New Orleans, and by its unique ambience in which my imagination flourished even in early childhood."

Rice has written 30 novels. She moved to California to attend university and has spent much of her life since

then in California, according to her biography.

But New Orleans has played a central role in much of her fiction.

"Interview with a Vampire" was her first novel when it was published in 1976 and is set in the city's French Quarter.

The book was later turned into a movie starring Brad Pitt and Tom Cruise. Another novel called "Feast of All Saints," was about free people of color in antebellum New Orleans.

The collection at Tulane will consist of manuscripts of most of her published works, some unpublished short stories, journals, screenplays, personal artifacts and correspondence from family, friends and fans of the author.

It will also include materials from her late husband Stan Rice and her sister, Alice Borchardt, who was also a writer.

Rose is an avid collector of rare books and manuscripts. He's also worked with the university to assist in other acquisitions including copies of John James Audubon's "Birds of America."

"As a New Orleans native, a rare book collector and having a daughter who graduated from Tulane University, this was a perfect opportunity to help give something back to both the Tulane and New Orleans communities," said Rose. □



This 1930 photo provided by the Sherborne School in Sherborne, England, shows members of Westcott House, including Alan Turing, center, who went on to become a World War II codebreaker and computing pioneer.

Associated Press

U.S. wants to return codebreaker's seized items to U.K. school

By COLLEEN SLEVIN

Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — A U.S. woman who said she was visiting England to do a study of the late World War II codebreaker and computing pioneer Alan Turing walked into the prestigious boys' boarding school he attended and asked to see a collection of his memorabilia. She was given a wooden box with items that once belonged to Turing, who helped crack Nazi Germany's secret codes and whose story inspired 2014's Oscar-winning film "The Imitation Game." Inside the box was his Ph.D. from Princeton University, his Order of the British Empire medal and other mementos.

When she left that day in 1984, the box was empty. The only thing left inside was a note asking for forgiveness and promising to return the items someday, according to a recent court filing by government lawyers.

More than 30 years later, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in Denver has the items that were seized from the Colorado home of the woman, who later changed her name to Julia Turing.

The Princeton degree was found behind a dresser in 2018. The medal, given for

contributions to a field, and a letter from King George VI awarding the honor to Alan Turing was found in a briefcase behind a wall in a bathroom.

Her offer to donate the items to the University of Colorado had launched a lengthy international investigation to sort out the rightful owner of the items, according to a forfeiture action filed Jan. 17 and first reported by BizWest. The action is the first of two legal steps to return the memorabilia to the Sherborne School in England.

Julia Turing had letters from Sherborne's treasurer, Col. A.W. Gallon, thanking her for previously returning most of the memorabilia and saying she could keep the diploma, according to court documents. They suggested she could show the correspondence to police if she was questioned. But school officials told investigators that giving away any school property would require the permission of its board of governors, which did not consider the matter, according to Sherborne documents.

The school said some items that Julia Turing previously returned were not the original items that were taken. It noted that the Order of the British Empire medal she sent back was tarnished

and did not include its miniature version and the king's letter. According to court documents, Julia Turing told investigators that she had bought OBE medals online, and several were found during the search of her home, along with the original discovered behind the bathroom wall.

In diaries and letters seized by investigators, she wrote of her "tremendous love and devotion" to Alan Turing and how she wished she did not have to hide his things. In one diary entry, addressed to Alan Turing, she worried about a museum forcing her to give up the items by claiming they are stolen, court documents show.

The U.S. government is asking a judge to give it permanent custody of the items so it can begin another legal process to return them to the school.

Julia Turing has until March to file an objection to the forfeiture. Her attorney, Katryna Spearman, did not return messages seeking comment. She has not been charged with a crime.

Sherborne School headmaster Dominic Luckett declined to comment Friday on the items removed from the school's archives because authorities are still dealing with the matter. □





Director Sam Mendes poses for photographers upon arrival at the Bafta Nominees Party, in central London, Saturday, Feb. 1, 2020.

Associated Press

'1917' named best picture at British Academy Awards

By JILL LAWLESS
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Gut-wrenching World War I epic "1917" was the big winner at Sunday's British Academy Film Awards, winning seven awards including best picture and best director.

Sam Mendes' homegrown drama bested hotly tipped American contenders "Joker," "The Irishman" and "Once Upon a Time ... in America" at a glitzy London event that was overshadowed by criticism of the nominees' lack of diversity - even from some of the nominees themselves.

Director Mendes based "1917" on his grandfather's wartime experiences. Shot in sinuous long takes that immerse viewers in the action, it follows two British soldiers on a perilous mission across No Man's Land to try to avert a suicidal offensive.

"1917" was also named best British film and won the cinematography prize - Roger Deakins' fifth win in that category. It also took the prizes for production design, sound and visual effects. Joaquin Phoenix was named best actor for "Joker," and Renee Zellweger took the best actress prize for the Judy Garland biopic "Judy."

Victory at the BAFTAs is often a good predictor for the work that will be recognized at Hollywood's Academy Awards, being held this year on Feb. 9. Like the Oscars, the British awards have struggled to become less male and white.

No women were nominated as best director for the seventh year running, and all 20 nominees in the lead and supporting performer categories were white.

Phoenix slammed the lack of diversity in his acceptance speech, saying it sent "a very clear message to people of color that 'You're not welcome here.'" Awards organizers called it "disappointing" that there were no performers of color among the acting nominees, who are chosen by 6,500 academy members

who work in the U.K. and international film industry.

The rising star award -- the one trophy decided by the public -- went to black British actor Micheal Ward. British star Cynthia Erivo, who is Oscar-nominated for her performance as abolitionist Harriet Tubman in "Harriet" but was snubbed by Britain's Academy, declined an invitation to perform at Sunday's award ceremony in protest.

The British Academy has promised to review its voting procedures.

"We've announced a wide-ranging review. We're going to be looking at everything across the board in terms of the awards process," said BAFTA chairwoman Pippa Harris.

"But also I think it's fair to say this is an industry-wide issue. It takes everyone to look at what they're doing," she said. "Awards are right at the end of a whole process, and so we need to look at the types of films being made, the opportunities that people are getting, how the films are being promoted. All of these things play a part."

Presenting the best-director award, Australian actress Rebel Wilson quipped that she could never achieve what the nominees did: "I just don't have the balls."

Scarlett Johansson, a best-actress nominee for "Marriage Story," said the lack of recognition for female directors was disappointing.

"So many women made great films this year. And I think it just goes to show you that there is a systemic problem that is very prevalent. And it's something that I think we're aware of but have to continue to fight against and make greater strides towards."

Hours before the event and several miles away, three people were wounded and a knifeman shot dead by police in what police called a terrorism-related attack. The BBC canceled plans to broadcast interviews from the red carpet on its news channel as a result. Brad Pitt was named

best supporting actor for "Once Upon a Time ... in America."

He didn't attend, but sent a jokey acceptance speech, read out by his co-star Margot Robbie.

"Hey Britain - heard you just became single. Welcome to the club," he said -- one of several references during the ceremony to the U.K.'s exit from the European Union, which became official on Friday.

Pitt also referenced recent tumult in Britain's royal family, saying he was going to name the trophy Harry, "because he's really excited about bringing it back to the States with him."

Laura Dern was named best supporting actress for playing a take-no-prisoners divorce lawyer in "Marriage Story." She noted that her mother, Dianne Ladd, had won the exact same prize in 1975, when Dern was 6, for "Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore."

Bong Joon-ho's Korean-language drama "Parasite" was named best foreign-language film and also took the prize for best original screenplay.

Organizers set out to make the awards ceremony carbon neutral for the first time. The red carpet was made from recycled fibers. Instead of the goody bags of past years, guests will receive a "gifting wallet" made from recycled plastic and containing vouchers.

The post-awards dinner will feature sustainably sourced food, including a vegan option.

Phoenix, a lifelong vegan, joined an animal welfare protest in London before Sunday's ceremony. He was with a group of activists who unfurled a large banner on Tower Bridge declaring "Factory farming destroys our planet. Go vegan."

Stars walking the red carpet were encouraged to make "sustainable" fashion choices by wearing an outfit they already owned or renting one for the occasion. □

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'Bad Boys' tops box office for third straight week

By JONATHAN LANDRUM Jr.
AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — "Bad Boys of Life" went for a three-peat at the box office during Super Bowl weekend.

The Sony Pictures' film starring Will Smith and Martin Lawrence brought in \$17.6 million to claim the No. 1 spot for the third straight week. The studio said the third installment became the highest-grossing film in the franchise with \$148 million, eclipsing "Bad Boys II." The earning for "Bad Boys" is the best box office turn-out compared to other No. 1 titles ("Glass," "Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle" and "Split") during the NFL championship weekend over the past four years. Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for Comscore, said box office numbers are typically lower during football's championship weekend. But he said Hollywood is banking on

Super Bowl commercials of films to help boost numbers moving forward.

"It's a longer-term benefit for Hollywood to have trailers presented to a massive worldwide audience," Dergarabedian said. "Studios bet big during the telecast by dropping trailers, which they're doing for the first time. They are hoping to build media buzz and get people talking."

The World War I tale "1917" notched second as the film continues to build momentum as an Oscars contender. It has been an impressive feat for the Sam Mendes-directed war movie after going from 11 screens in its first week to nearly 4,000.

Each week, "1917" has been holding on strong since receiving 10 Oscar nominations including best picture.

"It's a winner all day long," he said. "It's had this picture-perfect platform re-



This image released by Sony Pictures shows Martin Lawrence, left, and Will Smith in a scene from "Bad Boys for Life."

lease on its road to the Oscar telecast."

It was a bumpy start for newcomers "Gretel & Hansel" and "The Rhythm Section," which barely cracked the top 10.

After "Dolittle" placed third, the re-imagined ancient

fairy tale "Gretel & Hansel" opened at No. 4 with \$6.1 million, but received mixed reviews including a C- from CinemaScore.

"The Rhythm Section," an action drama starring Blake Lively, pulled in \$2.8 million barely notched "Knives

Out." "It does get increasingly difficult for films that don't over-perform on Super Bowl weekend to build any head of steam going forward," Dergarabedian said. "Particularly if they don't have good reviews." □

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